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The Majority's Right to Rule

Viewed from an historical perspective, the American people will most certainly win back their right to protect the flag.

By Richard Parker

ON THE COVER

U.S. Marines with 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Civil Affairs Group, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) inspect a drainage canal outside Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

U.S. Army/Spc. Kieran Cuddihy

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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'12 Myths of 21st-Century War'

Ralph Peters thinks and expresses what a great many of us war veterans feel (November). "Ivy League universities once produced heroes," he wrote. Immediately I thought of Sgt. Hamilton Fish and Lt. William Tiffany of the 1898 Rough Riders, who served in Cuba – Fish lost his life there – and of Theodore Roosevelt, their headstrong leader. None of them, or other bluebloods, had to go. It was just "holding our manhood high" above comfort and wealth.

Peters' "dumbed-down" school textbooks in fact reflect a lack of U.S. history in depth, relegating wars to the politically correct dustbin of history.

– Russell Rulau, Iola, Wis.



The war belongs not to the soldier who fights it but the entire nation. Whether or not we should have gone into Iraq is now a mute point and an argument that belongs to historians. The reality is that we are now there and our countrymen are engaged in battle. That means we must render full national support – far more important than political partisanship – to those we have sent to fight.

However, given our current level of manning and military resources, a ground war against Iran is simply not in our interest. Pulling in our horns for a bit to rearm, refit and rebuild may not play well to those who won the Cold War, but it may be the wisest thing to do now for our survival in the long run.

– Rick Fulton, Pittsburg, Kan.

As I read Ralph Peters' article, his 12 "myths" about 21st-century war evaporate in the heat of happenings in the real world. A real piece of "Foxy" propaganda, eh?

– Don Gregory, Alpha, Ky.

Ralph Peters has presented relevant areas of discussion but appears to lay the blame for our shortcomings at the wrong

doorstep. What we are experiencing is a crisis of leadership. President Bush and Vice President Cheney are correct that we must aggressively fight the war on terror, but they put our troops in the wrong arena.

Allow me to clarify just a few of Peters' 12 myths:

■ *War doesn't change anything.* As our troops make all the sacrifices, Bush tells Americans to go on living unchanged. How can we fight a war and not have it change our lives? Clearly the difference between this war and Vietnam is the fact that there is no draft.

■ *Victory is impossible today.* Victory should not be using our troops to create a democratic government in Iraq. Rather, we should be coordinating an international effort to track down and kill terrorists. Bush says this is unlike any war we've fought. So why are we fighting it like previous wars? Rather than capture and hold, we should seek and destroy.

■ *There is no military solution.* There is a military solution to the violence in Iraq, but U.S. troops should not be involved. If they leave now, it will get very bloody. But that will happen whenever we leave. Iraqis must determine their future.

■ *Our invasion of Iraq created our terrorist problems.* Invading Iraq didn't create our terrorist problems, but it has limited our ability to fight terrorism on a global scale. There is no single target, such as Iraq, toward which we can direct our efforts.

President George H.W. Bush made the right decision when he chose not to remove Saddam Hussein from power after the Gulf War. He realized Saddam was a buffer to more extremist elements in the Middle East.

We must divert the resources devoted to Iraq to rebuilding our military, providing services to veterans, addressing U.S. health care, securing our borders and solidifying our support for Israel.

— James A. Dugan, State College, Pa.

As Ralph Peters writes, when restrictions are placed on U.S. troops, nothing good happens. I say shoot to kill, not ask some politician if it's OK. If you don't shoot the bastard in the cleric's robe, he'll shoot you. No more nice guy in Iraq.

— Al Heidler, Parkland, Fla.

Ralph Peters' article is an incisive, realistic appraisal of the insouciant and misguided beliefs of the general public, oblivious to the crucial dimensions of the war on terror.

— John O'Halloran, Glen Allen, Va.

You need not have a Ph.D. to comprehend what Ralph Peters is saying. All that is required is a reasonable amount of common sense, along with some understanding of history.

His article brings to mind G.K. Chesterton's observation: "War is not the best way of settling differences; however, it is the only way of preventing their being settled for you."

— Steve Murphy, Holtsville, N.Y.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is a clarification to the "Sears Member Purchase Program" story that appeared in the Rapid Fire section of the December 2007 *American Legion Magazine*. Critical information was mistakenly edited out of the item.

The Sears Member Purchase Program, an American Legion affinity partnership, DOES NOT INCLUDE RETAIL SEARS OUTLETS. The program is limited to purchases made through Sears Commercial Sales.

Following is the original release, which contains accurate and complete information about the program. *The American Legion Magazine* regrets the error and apologizes for any inconveniences it may have caused for its members or for Sears.

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The Fairness Doctrine

I read about Rep. Dennis Kucinich's support of the so-called Fairness Doctrine with amusement (Big Issues, November). The real issue here is not fairness or diversity but conservative vs. liberal. Otherwise, Kucinich would demand a balance to liberal radio programs such as "The Alan Colmes Show," "The Ed Schultz Show" and Air America. There would also be a balance to *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, ABC, NBC, CNN and the rest.

How about Kucinich and other like-minded people listen to and watch what they want, and the rest of us will do the same?

— Tom Benjamin, Saugerties, N.Y.

I was shocked to read Rep. Dennis Kucinich's view of fairness in the media.

Just review the makeup of U.S. industries: banking, insurance, brokerage houses, steel, aluminum, glass, chemical and so on. Companies that meet the demands of their customers dominate the marketplace.

Kucinich's theory would examine whether or not failed companies were fairly treated in advertising, loan policies and employment practices. Did successful companies employ sufficient minorities and people of different sexual orientation? Was payroll distribution a shared response to profits?

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news is already an infringement on freedom of speech we're supposed to be guaranteed by the First Amendment. Just look at PBS and NPR.

— John W. Weidenhof, Lewes, Del.

Dennis Kucinich failed to point out that there are more than 700 taxpayer-funded broadcasting outlets nationwide that meet his definition of "diverse." If Kucinich were honest he would also want to muzzle the print media. After all, they are distributed across state lines and fall under interstate commerce regulations the same as any other product. If you assault one form of freedom of the press, you assault them all.

Make no mistake: if Kucinich gets the legislation passed, the Internet is next.

— Kermit Smith, Hampton, Ga.

I listen to talk radio, including Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity. These stations do not discuss Paris Hilton's legal issues. They are too busy covering important issues, like how liberals are trying to tax us to death. And talk radio is where I can hear all the news that other stations (ABC, CBS, PBS, etc.) refuse to cover.

On talk radio, I hear what good things the U.S. military is accomplishing in Iraq. The "drive-by media" is too busy telling us about the bad things.

Let people make their own choices, and let the market drive itself. The government needs to find better ways to spend its time and our money.

— Mike McLean, Richfield, Minn.

'Tropical Squeeze'

On behalf of Puerto Rican veterans, we want to thank Jeff Stoffer for his excellent article describing the problems suffered by our veteran population of more than 153,000 people (November).

It's about time that one of America's most multilayered bureaucracies upgrades a real health-care system for U.S. citizens who live below the poverty level. Puerto Rico has supported every conflict since World War I, so it's a shame that the San Juan facility ranks No. 1 among all VA hospitals for physical deficiencies.

Thank you for helping our voices be heard by the Legion's membership and by our fellow Americans.

— Ivan Vega-Lassalle, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico

'A Vicious Cycle'

Thank you for Ken Olsen's article on urban dog fighting (November), a public-health problem that gets only occasional attention. I have run into this time and again as a deputy sheriff, narcotics agent and, most recently, humane and animal-control officer in the South Bay area of San Jose, Calif. My fellow officers have to deal with vicious dog owners as well, going in unarmed where police will only go with backup.

Unfortunately, enforcement is difficult without the mandate of law. Domestic animals are considered property; thus, even vicious dog cases must be treated as such. Many times, a shelter is forced to return an animal to an owner because of lack of witness

involvement in a vicious bite case. Behavior testing should be mandated before suspected aggressive animals are returned to their owners, and in vicious and neglect cases, laws should be enacted that restrict ownership of animals.

— Charlie Atkins, Morgan Hill, Calif.

My mother was the victim of a pit-bull attack while walking in her neighborhood in New Mexico. It blind-sided her and tore her lower leg open, and if two brave men hadn't stopped their truck, got out and scared the dog away, Mom probably would have been mauled to death. She sat in a pool of blood, waiting for the ambulance the men called.

Nothing of any legal significance transpired. The county and city obviously do not care about dog control. Mom doesn't go on walks anymore. She is afraid of legal and/or social repercussions.

How is this different from a serious assault by a person?

— Josh Nims, Waco, Texas

'The Worst and Best 18 Months'

I just read the excellent article by Chaplain Lt. Col. Douglas Etter, about his service in Iraq (November). As a retired Navy chaplain who served with a Marine battalion in Vietnam, and as a hospital corpsman during the Korean War, I found "Quiet Conversations" especially moving. My prayers are for our troops in harm's way.

Godspeed, and keep up the good work.

— Clark A. Tea, Cathedral City, Calif.

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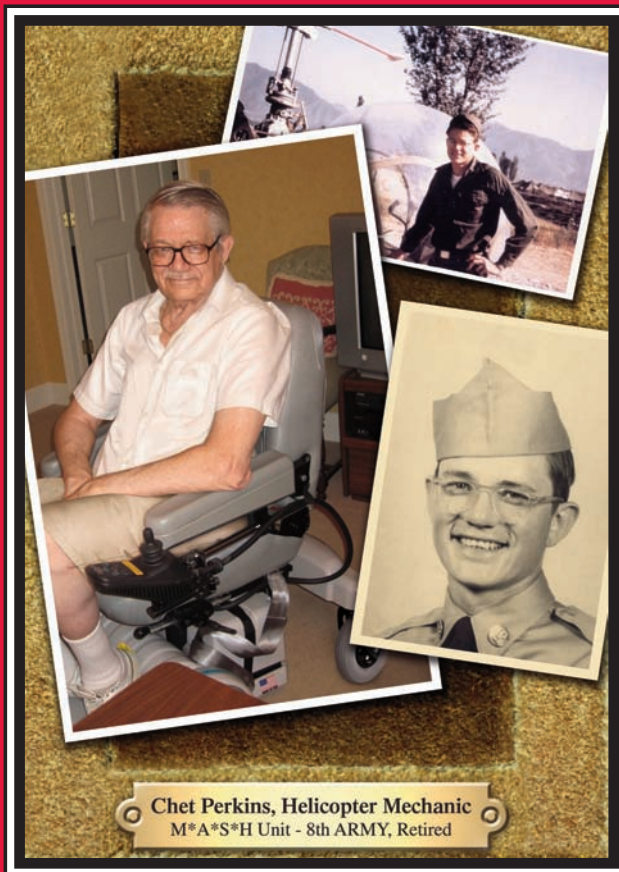


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Granted, it was a midterm year, without a presidential race to fire up the electorate. But the participation level also was symbolic of the semiconscious state of political awareness and engagement too many Americans have assumed since the 1960s. Even with spikes every four years for the presidential elections, voter turnout has followed a troubling trajectory in recent decades, rarely exceeding 60 percent even when there's a controversy on the ballot. Last November, one municipal election in Texas reported a 6.73-percent turnout of registered voters.

Some would argue that American disenfranchisement is nothing more than a myth built on skewed statistics that overestimate the number of eligible voters. Some believe that pre-election polls too often predetermine outcomes, and that early reporting of results across the time zones keeps voters home. In some communities, however, the problem can be pinned on such routine matters as a shortage of volunteers to work at the polls, time constraints for busy families and, worst of all, lack of knowledge about who or what to vote for.

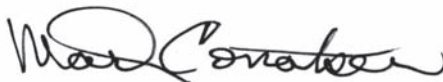
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As the 2008 election year unfolds, The American Legion will lead a nonpartisan nationwide campaign called "Vote America '08."

The program addresses voter participation from three directions:

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- At the state level, American Legion departments will help organize and promote election forums and candidate debates to improve public knowledge of the issues and awareness of candidate positions.
- Nationally, the Legion will work hard this year to educate and motivate voters, particularly on issues relevant to the organization's resolutions and principles, such as veterans health care and benefits, homeland security, flag protection and national defense.

For over a half-century, since the passage of Resolution 136 at the 1952 National Convention, The American Legion has made a high priority of strong voter knowledge and turnout. The concern imparted in that resolution – "whereas, our democratic republic is threatened by an apathetic populace who choose not to participate in our country's electoral process" – is the same today as it was then, when American troops were, as they are today, risking their lives and spilling their blood in foreign lands where tyrannies of the past have feared little more than the idea of free elections.




National Commander
Marty Conatser

MEMORANDA

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American Legion posts looking for guidance on their voter-participation programs can go to www.legion.org to download support material, or they can request booklets by e-mail or in writing:

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Vote America '08

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Today's terrorists take full advantage of technology to stay one step ahead of U.S. law enforcement and intelligence services. Our laws, including the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), predate many of the technologies we all take for granted today. Until Congress updated FISA by passing the Protect America Act (PAA) in August, we were unable to conduct critical surveillance of foreign terrorists planning to conduct attacks inside the United States.

Critics of PAA have managed to take the American public's attention off the terrorist threat by exaggerating risks to the constitutional liberties of law-abiding Americans. These claims are baseless. The Protect America Act does not allow the abuse of Americans' rights to freely communicate with friends, family or colleagues overseas.

It is disappointing that fearmongers are spreading false rumors about this important legislation. The Protect America Act has not opened the door to warrantless searches of Americans' computers, homes, or medical or library records.

The Protect America Act does not permit domestic targeting of electronic surveillance at Americans without a court order. In fact, a court order must be sought before any person – foreign or American – can be targeted for electronic surveillance within the United States.

Our nation remains under serious threat of attack by al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. Daily we ask members of our armed forces to risk their lives fighting terrorists overseas. How, then, could we refuse to give intelligence operatives the ability to analyze data that would allow them to take out these terrorists before they succeed in killing Americans?

The U.S. government has a duty to keep its citizens safe and secure, and Congress has the responsibility to ensure that the executive branch is given the resources and tools it needs to accomplish that mission. But the Protect America

Act (PAA), which amends our nation's surveillance laws, is not the right tool.

The PAA, which the Bush administration characterizes as a technology update, replaces the warrant requirement and court-review process in the Foreign

Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) with a set of secret procedures to govern when and how the administration can engage in surveillance activities inside the United States. In reality, the PAA has little to do with technology and a lot to do with an administration that doesn't respect co-equal branches of government.

Perhaps the chief defect of the PAA is sloppiness. The Bush administration has admitted that the law, which supposedly governs only electronic surveillance, might be interpreted to authorize the warrantless disclosure of U.S. citizens' business and medical records. Rather than fixing the law, the administration has pledged to never put forward such a "strained" reading of the PAA. In assessing that pledge, keep in mind this administration's track record, including visits by White House staff to then-Attorney General John Ashcroft's hospital bed to coerce his approval of an illegal wiretap program.

We need to modernize FISA and remove unnecessary procedural hurdles. But FISA court review of domestic communications involving U.S. citizens is not an unnecessary procedural hurdle. It is a constitutional safeguard of our most basic rights.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Supporters of the Protect America Act say it updates the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, or FISA. Critics call it the "Police America Act," alleging it could be interpreted to allow warrantless monitoring of law-abiding Americans.

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Matthew Everett Illustration



FLIGHT RISK

Debate lingers over the isolation of infected U.S. travelers.

BY MARGARET DAVIDSON

The odyssey of Andrew Speaker, the Atlanta lawyer infected with a dangerous type of tuberculosis resistant to many standard treatments, was a dramatic reminder last summer that today's world really is an increasingly interconnected global village where one country's germ has the potential of quickly becoming another country's epidemic.

Fortunately, Speaker's flights on commercial airlines didn't seem to spread the disease to others, here or abroad, despite multiple snafus associated with the incident. The case, however, did raise significant concerns about the ability of the United States to control epidemics in a vulnerable era when extensively drug-resistant TB, avian flu and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), as well as bioterrorism, all loom as possible threats.

The Speaker incident "exposed a disturbing picture of the federal government's ability to respond to a known public-health incident and protect our homeland security," Sens. Joe Lieberman, Susan Collins and Hillary Clinton wrote in a letter to the Government Accountability Office, calling for a review of U.S. government response. "We should never again have a situation where delays and failures in communication between the federal government, other domestic public-health officials and relevant commercial entities lead to needless exposure and risk."

Speaker's saga began in March, when he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. At one point, doctors thought he had the rare – and often fatal – extensively drug-resistant, or XDR, form of the disease,

but subsequent tests determined it was a less dangerous, but still very serious, multi-drug-resistant, or MDR, type.

Accounts vary as to what county health authorities said in advising him to cancel the European trip he had planned for his wedding and honeymoon. Speaker says he was told he was not a threat to anyone. The health authorities, meanwhile, claim they spoke with him and urged him to forgo the trip, then tried to deliver a written notice to him May 11-13 letting him know that he risked harming others and himself if he proceeded with his plans. By then, he was out of the country.

Not only did Speaker fail to cancel his trip, he left ahead of schedule – on May 12, flying from his hometown of Atlanta to Paris, along with about 430 other passengers and 18 crew members.

Paris was only his first stop. He continued on, taking flights to Athens, then a Greek island, Rome, Prague and eventually Montreal. From there, he took a car across the border back into the United States.

Federal health officials made attempts while Speaker was abroad to bring his journey to a halt, but they were unsuccessful. So, too, was their attempt to stop him at the border. Though the customs officer at the Champlain, N.Y., crossing had received notification that he should be detained, he apparently decided that Speaker didn't appear sick and let him pass.

A picture of the smiling young man with his beautiful new bride blanketed the media last summer, making it easy to forget the danger of his disease.

Only 49 U.S. cases of the extremely drug-resistant form of tuberculosis were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention between 1992 and 2006. However, CDC Director Julie L. Gerberding warned in a statement prepared for a congressional hearing on the case that “XDR TB will continue to pose a serious risk to the U.S. as long as it exists anywhere.”

The critical importance of preventing its spread was emphasized in a commentary in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. “The issuance in 2006 by the World Health Organization of a global alert about XDR-TB underscores the harsh reality that XDR-TB has the potential to transform a once-treatable infection into an infectious disease as deadly, if not more so, than TB (was) at the beginning of the 20th century,” physician Howard Markel and lawyers Lawrence O. Gostin and Daniel P. Fidler wrote.

Speaker’s form of tuberculosis offers more hopeful options for treatment than he would have had under his previous diagnosis. But success is not guaranteed. Patients generally must take drugs for 18 to 24 months, and in-patient costs can average \$500,000. The cure rate is 70 to 80 percent under the best of conditions, but generally only about half are cured.

To try to help ensure his recovery, Speaker opted to have a diseased portion of his lung removed at the renowned National Jewish Medical and Research Center in Denver, where he was treated while in isolation ordered by authorities after his return to the United States.

Federal officials call Speaker’s case an unusual situation in that he failed to cooperate with authorities. Francisco Averhoff, chief of the Quarantine and Border Health Services branch of the CDC, says he thinks CDC personnel involved in the case worked properly by functioning under “a covenant of trust” with the patient. However, he says, “In a very rare event, I think it caught public health off guard when that trust was violated.”

Officials point to changes that are in the works to allow them to better respond to future incidents, Averhoff added.

A renewed need to control epidemics has been confronting public-health personnel with new challenges in separating ill individuals, as well as those with whom they have been in contact, from the general public.

Procedures for restricting both sets of individuals were in the past often referred to as “quarantine.” Now “isolation” is the term for handling the

Officials struggle to keep infected patients from endangering others

Robert Daniels sat in a Phoenix jail for months of solitary confinement with no view of the outside, video cameras recording him 24 hours a day, and no walking or other exercise beyond his room, according to his legal complaint.

But Daniels was not a convicted criminal. The 28-year-old man is a TB patient with a multi-drug-resistant strain of the disease. He ended up in the jail ward of the Maricopa Medical Center because he didn’t wear a mask in public as ordered by authorities trying to protect others from being infected.

“He was deprived of many things that a patient should get,” says Daniel J. Pochoda, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona and co-counsel in Daniels’ lawsuit against Maricopa County.

Daniels was later admitted for treatment at a Denver hospital after a court ordered him transferred. The county’s treatment of the TB patient was unusual, Pochoda says. In fact, experts report that few patients fail to comply with health-care recommendations. However, occasionally – as in the cases of Daniels and Andrew Speaker, the Atlanta lawyer who traveled to Europe and Canada after he was diagnosed with multi-drug-resistant TB – authorities feel they must act without hesitation to protect the public. It’s often a matter of balancing individual freedom and the public good.

Authorities will typically isolate patients by confining them to their homes and posting notices forbidding anyone from entering or leaving. Sometimes they prohibit activities like attending school or working at jobs involving food preparation. However, many authorities can confine individuals to hospitals or jails.

Failure to take prescribed medicine has landed some patients in jail. Completing the drug regimen is critical not only for the patients but for the public. Resistance to drugs can develop when the regimen is not completed, and others can be infected.

The widespread use of so-called “directly observed therapy” (DOT) has greatly decreased the use of detention in New York City, site of more than a third of the United States’ extensively drug-resistant cases. There, health-care workers watch patients take their medication to ensure compliance. In California, which has the country’s highest per-capita rate of TB cases of various types, about 80 percent of TB patients are subject to surveillance.

“It’s very labor-intensive,” says Sarah Royce, chief of the TB Control Branch of the California Department of Health. However, DoH saves money in the long term when fewer patients need to be treated, she says.

But California is using carrots as well as sticks to ensure patients get their treatments. “We use lots of incentives and enablers,” Royce says. Among them are meals, bus tokens for appointments and shelter for homeless patients. “We’ll do whatever it takes.”

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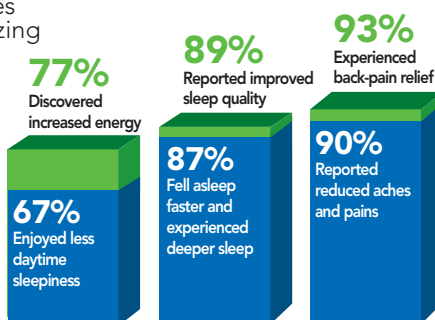
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infected person, and “quarantine” is the procedure imposed upon a sick individual’s contacts.

A maze of state, local and federal laws dictate how these procedures are handled. Generally, federal authorities don’t get involved except in cases like Speaker’s, when the individual enters the country or interstate issues are involved. The order to isolate Speaker was the first isolation or quarantine order federal authorities had issued since 1963. Sometimes federal and state quarantine authorities overlap – for instance, in the case of authority over passengers on a plane arriving in a large U.S. city from a foreign country.

Frequently, state and local authorities must try to follow outdated regulations in need of change. Many state laws are 40 to 100 years old and have failed to keep up with the latest scientific developments, health threats and societal attitudes. But that may change.

“In light of recent threats, states have begun to reconsider quarantine authority within their emergency-response systems,” Markel, Gostin and Fidler wrote. In response to the anthrax incidents in 2001, the Model State Emergency Health Powers Act was drafted and has since been adopted as law, in whole or in part, in at least 38 states.

Expert opinions vary about how well the law handles a major issue in a democratic society: how to protect the public without jeopardizing individual rights. The model law authorizes temporary isolation or quarantine without notice if delays would significantly jeopardize controlling the spread of the disease. For continuation of the restriction, authorities must within 10 days petition for a court order. Isolation and quarantine restrictions on the individuals are limited to 30 days, with provisions for extensions.

Even so, regulations continue to vary considerably from state to state. For example, in most states authorities can initiate restrictions by issuing public-health orders. In other states, an individual can’t be detained without a court order. Differences also exist as to which diseases can result in isolation or quarantine.

At the federal level, authorities can only restrict individuals associated with diseases for which authorization has been created by order of the president. In addition to TB, those ailments are cholera, diphtheria, plague, smallpox, yellow fever, viral hemorrhagic fevers, SARS and the type of influenza that can cause a pandemic.

Critics have questioned whether the federal law is constitutional, since it does not ensure individuals a right to a hearing before isolating them. The

CDC did include a right to a hearing in its isolation order for Speaker, but he opted not to ask for one.

His case significantly elevated public debate about whether federal authorities can prevent an infectious person from leaving the country. CDC Director Gerberding said during a media update on the case that the center is examining whether or not it needs additional statutory authority to deal with someone like Speaker, who wished to leave the country.

Also in the works – slowly – are proposed changes that might have helped combat problems authorities had in quickly locating passengers on the planes to advise them about their possible exposure. They would require airlines and ocean liners arriving from foreign countries to maintain detailed contact information for passengers and crew and to submit those lists electronically to the CDC if requested. However, the CDC proposed the changes to its quarantine rules back in November 2005 in response to the threat of a flu pandemic, and though the period for receiving comments ended on March 1, 2006, action has lagged since then. Airlines opposed the changes, citing the additional cost involved in providing the data.

Privacy is also a concern. Among the information collected, though on a voluntary basis, would be names of traveling companions and e-mail addresses.

The need for faster access to passenger information was dramatically demonstrated during the SARS outbreak in 2003. Authorities were unable to use paper copies of airline manifests and customs information in time to notify passengers potentially exposed to SARS within the 10-day incubation period.

Also in progress is increasing the number of quarantine stations at airports and other major entry spots into the country, and adding staff and training. A perception in the 1970s that microbial threats had been brought under control led to the dismantling of much of the system.

The Speaker incident “reinforces the need to advance our efforts to modernize our Quarantine and Migration Health System and update federal quarantine regulations,” Gerberding said in her statement prepared for Congress. “We believe the lessons learned from this case will improve HHS (Health and Human Services)/CDC’s ability to protect the nation’s health in our ever-changing global environment.” 🌿

Margaret Davidson is a writer specializing in coverage of medical issues.

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FRESH PAINT

Infantry sergeant bears witness to Ramadi's historic transformation.

BY U.S. ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS JACK ROBISON

Just over a year ago, my platoon boarded a plane in Kuwait for my first trip into Iraq. We were bound for Al Taqaddum Airfield, and after a few days there would be flying to Camp Corregidor, on the eastern edge of Ar Ramadi. More than half of my soldiers had already spent a year in Ramadi with the 1-503rd Infantry (we were later re-designated 1-9 Infantry at Fort Carson, Colo.), and we knew what we were in for.

We had spent the previous year training as hard as we could. Starting with the basics – discipline, marksmanship, first aid and physical training – we threw more and more complicated situations at ourselves until company and combined arms live-fire exercises were normal. If we needed something, we found a way to get it. If we didn't have a range complex enough for us, we built it. If there was a piece of gear that might make us marginally more lethal or better protected in combat, we bought it.

Once our fighting ability was beyond question, we started to focus on the finer points of modern warfare that would allow us to accomplish our overall mission. Without the tools to rebuild and reverse the chaos, we could never be more than partially successful, so we trained on how to gather our own intelligence on the ground, how to exploit that intelligence, how to work with other units and other services, and how to avoid cultural problems that would alienate the people and compound our difficulties. We learned how to open doors with respect if we could, and how to open them with demolitions and shotguns if we

ATTACK LEVELS were on a downward trend between June and late October 2007 and were at their lowest levels since January, according to Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno, commander, Multi-National Corps Iraq, and Iraqi Lt. Gen. Abud Qanbar, commander, Baghdad Operational Command. At a briefing, they reported that IED attacks were down by 60 percent, with a notable decrease in lethality. Iraqis were able to celebrate the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan in parks, restaurants and streets due to decreased violence.





couldn't. We learned how to transition between cautious dialogue one minute and explosive violence the next.

At that time, Ramadi was still one of the most vicious fights in Iraq, a rubble city of more than 250,000 people, primarily Sunni, and a traditional stronghold of al-Qaeda and several other hardcore insurgent groups. The police force had all either quit or been killed. The Iraqi Army and a battalion from the 101st Airborne were under siege in their camps with only a few roads in the sector that could be consistently traveled, even in armored vehicles. Entire districts of the city hadn't seen U.S. soldiers on the ground in months.

I read once that war can be defined as long periods of boredom punctuated by short bursts of terror, or something to that effect. In reality, the periods of boredom weren't all that long here. Between October and March, we were fighting somewhere in the city nearly every day. My platoon was in contact three or four times a week

at a minimum for a while, usually more often when we were downtown at OP Eagle's Nest, and it was fairly common for the battalion to have several fights going on at once. Our headquarters became very good at juggling tanks, aircraft and indirect fire, and handling multiple situations simultaneously in a snarl of tense radio traffic.

SUNNI AND SHIITE LEADERS

from the southwestern Baghdad neighborhoods of al Jihad and al Furat recently signed an important reconciliation agreement. Iraqi officials visited the group and agreed to help restore operations at al Furat hospital, improve local delivery of oil, return the sewage station to working order and restore a local mosque.

Six months ago, we knew we had turned a corner in our efforts to dislodge al-Qaeda from its traditional stronghold in Ar Ramadi. For Task Force 1-9, the tipping point might have been the house-by-house clearance of the insurgent-infested Malaab and Al Iskan districts. One of the most significant actions was sending our soldiers to the aid of a local sheik who found himself and his tribe in a gunfight with al-Qaeda.

That night literally turned into a game of "shirts and skins." With no way to distinguish between the sheik's people and the insurgents, and with everyone running around shooting in the dark, we had to revert to the old pick-up football game method of telling people apart, and had the sheik's

DoD

guys take off their shirts. As the saying goes, “If it’s stupid, but it works, it’s not stupid.”

That gesture of support, combined with our history of seeking out and engaging local leadership who could influence the population, indirectly led to a chain reaction of sheiks who, faced with an either/or decision, threw their lot in with the coalition and began to support our efforts to rebuild the police force and get the local government back on its feet. After a series of operations that cleared virtually every house in central and eastern Ramadi, assisted by an increasingly competent Iraqi army and the first group of trained policemen in over a year, the ultra-violence that had permeated Ar Ramadi for several years just stopped.

To say that the silence was deafening wouldn’t be far off the mark. After fighting so consistently, for so long, I don’t think anybody really believed that the fragile peace could last for long. Where a day without significant violence had been an exception in the past, now the days stretched into a tense week, and then a month, until it became more and more obvious that this might not be a coincidence. Not that there weren’t isolated incidents of violence; there were six small-arms attacks in our area in May, and we found 12 IEDs, although none of them detonated. But when you consider the fact that between February and March, our two busiest months, there were a total of 43 IED strikes, another 119 IEDs found before they detonated, 144 enemy attacks with small-arms fire and 56 RPGs fired at us, the change in environment was almost disorienting.

The trend has continued downward without exception. In September – the first month of Ramadan, traditionally marked by a serious spike in violence here – we found one IED that did not detonate. That’s it. No small arms, no RPGs, no IED strikes. So far in October, as I write this, there have been none.

Task Force 1-9 wasted no time taking advantage of the more permissive environment. There had already been significant and ongoing political, civic and social efforts to change Ramadi for the better, but Lt. Col. Chuck Ferry, Col. John Charlton (commander of the 3rd Infantry Division’s 1st Bri-

THE LARGEST CACHE of explosively formed penetrators, or EFPs, ever discovered in a single location was reported after a concerned citizen tipped off coalition forces. The cache included more than 120 fully assembled EFPs and more than 150 copper disks of four different sizes used in making EFPs. It also included 600-plus pounds of C4 and other explosive materials, mortar rounds of various caliber, 107 mm rockets, mortar tubes and claymore-type mines.



gade, operating on the western side of the city), and others now had a small window of opportunity to try to sustain what had been started.

Civil Affairs. When the battle is going on, destruction is part of our business. We do what we can not to cause unnecessary damage, but when thousands of bullets are flying and massive explosions are just another part of clocking in, a few windows are bound to get broken, to say the least. The difference between us and the insurgents, who couldn’t seem to care less what they destroy, is that we

follow the you-break-it-you-buy-it rule. If the infantry is the tip of the spear during a hot war, it can be said that civil affairs is the tip of the spear – or shovel or bucket loader – after the hot war cools down. These soldiers work hard during the fighting, clearing sectors while attached to the infantry, working with local institutions and assisting the population. But they really step up once the dust settles. After assessing the sewage, water, electrical, academic and trash situations, they begin to prioritize and plan the reconstruction of the city.

For soldiers of B Company, 486th Civil Affairs Battalion, a reserve unit out of Tulsa, Okla., the establishment of Civil Military Operations Centers, or CMOCs, became one of their most prominent missions. The CMOC is the most common point of contact for the local population in need of assistance or looking for some restitution for destroyed or damaged property. In addition to helping the Iraqis, the battalion helped us by providing better answers for disgruntled civilians.

When an Iraqi starts flailing his arms and



Lance Cpl. Julio I. Perez speaks with a local Iraqi farmer. Perez is a rifleman with 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, India Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment. DoD

talking 1,000 miles an hour while pointing to a .50-caliber bullet hole in his Mercedes, an infantry platoon doesn't have any way to fix his problem on the spot. Directing him to the CMOC, where he can talk to interpreters and soldiers who are accustomed to handling these types of situations, allows us to move on with our primary mission while still building some good will for the long run. In a society all too accustomed to injustice, a situation like this can highlight the difference between us and the enemy.

In addition to establishing the CMOC, civil-affairs teams coordinate with local leaders to establish or repair civic and government systems and restore the basic needs of civilization to the local population. For a good civil-affairs team, this doesn't always mean throwing money onto the fire and taking the easy way out. The Iraqis are always willing to accept coalition money, but sometimes the less obvious solution is the better one.

Recently, when two local leaders requested a new water-treatment plant be built in their area, they were directed to the 486th CA. Instead of writing a blank check, Master Sgt. Charles Smith of Stillwater, Okla., went out to do an assessment. He discovered that the locals already had a \$2 million treatment plant; it just wasn't working. After inspecting the plant to determine the source of the problem, he realized the people didn't need a new plant; they just needed additional diesel fuel to run the generators at the existing plant. Once the root of the problem was addressed, the Iraqis had their plant without wasting unnecessary U.S. tax dollars.

A sure way to cultivate trouble is to have multitudes of young men hanging around without

gainful employment. One of the first orders of business was to begin a job-creation program, and invest the working-age population in Ramadi. Both the CA team and company commanders were encouraged to be proactive in starting work projects that would both benefit the local population and provide work, bringing reconstruction money into the economy and giving some military-age males an incentive to stay on the right track.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that if a senior commander looks at a PowerPoint slide and sees a huge amount of money spent in an area, that always equals huge results. Money spent for the sake of spending money is equated by 1st Lt. Morgan Ashworth, a Ph.D. candidate at Oklahoma State University when he is not on active duty, to the method of marksmanship sometimes used by low-level insurgents in Iraq: "If you shove an AK-47 around a corner and spray 100 bullets, that's not

SINCE THE TROOP SURGE BEGAN

last spring, coalition and Iraqi security forces have uncovered no fewer than eight separate al-Qaeda media offices and cells, captured or killed 24 al-Qaeda propaganda cell members, and discovered 23 terabytes of information, leaving officials to believe al-Qaeda's ability to spread propaganda has been reduced by as much as 80 percent, according to Navy Rear Adm. Gregory J. Smith, communications chief for Multi-National Force Iraq.

the same as aiming carefully and hitting 10 targets with 10 bullets." By carefully targeting the money spent, and considering second- and third-order effects, you're going to see a much better

result without wasting precious resources.

Weaning the Iraqis from dependence on U.S. guidance and assistance is just as important as weaning them from U.S. money. If they get used to taking the easy route and asking the Americans to do things for them, they never learn to use their own government systems and follow the proper channels to get projects off the ground.

As in so many other things, it starts with boots on the ground. "The average Iraqi citizen wants our presence more than our presents," he said. "Of course, they'll take our presents, too."

Intangible benefits matter. A U.S. soldier wearing 80 pounds of gear, bristling with weapons and night vision, covered head to toe with dark sunglasses, gloves and armor, can be an intimidating presence in a man's home. Once security is established, it is vital that the leaders on the ground reveal their humanity.

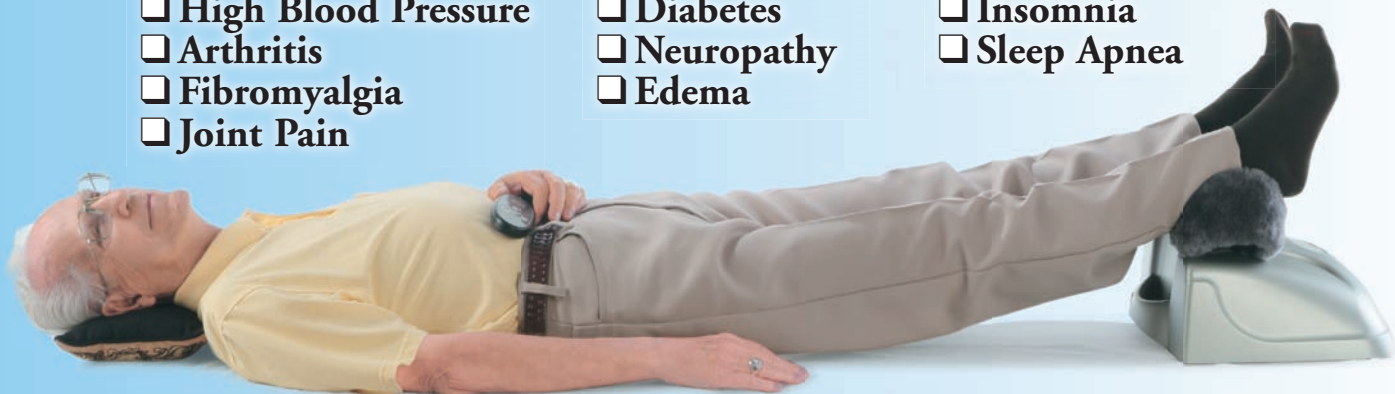
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As a Chiropractor, I would like to say that the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and additionally freeing up a spine that has become stiff and arthritic. —*Garry Gorsuch, D.C.*

The ad I saw almost sounded "too good to be true". With your no risk money back guarantee I figured I had nothing to lose so I purchased the machine... and boy, am I glad I did! I am 75 years old and suffer from sciatica, which makes my back and legs tighten up and causes numbness. I was taking 8-10 Aleve™ every day. After using the machine for only 4 minutes, I noticed my lower back loosening up. Since I have been using the machine I haven't taken any pain pills and have been pain free. My sciatica is not giving me problems anymore and my body stays loosened up. I have also had a snoring problem for quite some time, however, since using the machine my snoring has subsided. My wife is so excited! I cannot tell you how much this machine has turned my life around. —*C. Cummings*

After having a stroke, I could no longer exercise the way I used to. As a result, I developed edema. A friend of mine introduced me to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. I loved it and I purchased one for myself. After using the machine daily for a few weeks, my symptoms of edema were completely gone. I now use the machine twice a day for 16 minutes each time on speed 3. What a wonderful way to exercise. —*Robert M.*

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I have had constipation problems for over 25 years. Since I have been using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ I have been regular every day and have begun to lose weight. This is truly a blessing and is so easy to use. —*Jeannie*

I am in my late 80's and have diabetes. The first thing I noticed when I started using my machine was that my feet were warm when I went to bed. They were always ice cold before. Because one of my problems is poor circulation, I use the machine three times a day for 10 minutes each; in the morning, late afternoon and just before bed. I almost forgot to mention that I have not been able to lift my arms above my head. Now I can do it. You think that's no big deal until you can't do it anymore. —*Ralph K.*

My husband and I have been into natural products all of our lives but nothing has ever affected us like the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. My husband is 72 and delivers flowers. He carries 5 gallon buckets of water. Since using the machine, his back hasn't hurt him at all. My hips would hurt if I stood too long and I would get weak and have to sit down. Now I can walk and sit as long as I want. I don't take pain medication anymore. In the morning, when I get out of bed I'm not stiff anymore. At 65, wow, this is great! Thank you for offering such a great machine. We are going to tell everyone we know about it. —*Cheryl J.*

I had suffered with sleep apnea for many years and had been taking drugs for it. I was told I would have to use a breathing apparatus. In the meantime, I was introduced to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ and decided to purchase one. Within two weeks, I was sleeping more deeply and restfully than ever before. —*David B.*

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A U.S. Marine with 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Civil Affairs Group, II Marine Expeditionary Force, talks with young Iraqi students at a school in the Zangora district of Ar Ramadi. DoD

it's safe to do so, removing gloves before shaking hands – all these little things transform us from faceless stormtroopers to a bunch of sweaty guys out doing a hard job. Add a little Arabic into the mix, or an interpreter with a simple message of “We’re here to help ... we need you to help us,” and then follow that up by respecting their family and possessions as much as possible, and some, though not all, people will begin to help us. This in turn sets up civil affairs for success and leads to long-term mission accomplishment. It is virtually impossible to defeat an insurgency without the support of at least some of the population, and it’s very hard to get that support if they don’t see you as a human being.

Working hand in hand with 1-9 Infantry, and giving much of the credit to mature and intelligent leadership on the ground, the 486th has been tremendously effective in Ramadi. When soldiers arrived, they found a city largely in ruins. Approximately 20 percent of the houses in our sector were able to get electricity, and only around 10 percent had running water. Today, those numbers are around 90 percent for running water, and nearly everyone gets electricity for at least part of the day.

Ramadi General Hospital is functioning, as are smaller clinics in the area. This doesn’t mean that they are functioning on the same level that we would expect back home. There is a shortage of good doctors, since almost anyone who could get away in previous years has already fled to other parts of Iraq, or to neighboring countries. Corruption also plays a part, hindering the flow of supplies. All in all, the medical situation today is much better than it has been through most of the war, but still has a long way to go.

Academically, the city has undergone some

success. Returning the primary and secondary schools to a working state has been largely accomplished. Classes at Anbar University have continued, and students who couldn’t get to class for months are taking advantage of the more secure situation. Ramadi could benefit greatly if many of the educated citizens and professionals who fled the country would return. It remains to be seen if they will have the inclination or the means to come back.

TERRORIST OPERATIONS ARE DOWN

by 59 percent in and around Baghdad, operations targeting Iraqi forces are down more than 60 percent, car bombs are down by 65 percent, fatalities due to car bombs are down by 81 percent, and casualties due to enemy attacks are down by 77 percent, reported Army Maj. Gen. Richard Sherlock, joint staff director for operational planning.

Police Training. That the Iraqi police force exists at all is a major improvement, but further training and equipment are necessary if they are going to be more than a temporary solution. In April, Lt. Col. Ferry tasked Dog Company with the establishment of the East Ramadi Iraqi Army and Police Training Academy. There, police trainees who

might have been shopkeepers or farmers a few months ago are learning how to do more than fire their weapons.

Beginning with the police-force leadership, U.S. Army,

Marine and civilian forces began instructing classes on marksmanship, individual and team movement, police ethics, detainee handling and processing, searching personnel and vehicles, checkpoint operations, evidence processing, and many more of the finer points of police work. Selected individuals then complete a detective’s course across town.

The police forces are criticized in the media for having been infiltrated by the insurgency. That is surely true in parts of Iraq, but it’s hard to doubt the motivation of some recruits. Between classes on detainee processing, I was practicing my limited Arabic with a few of them when one mentioned that he remembered seeing me down in the Malaab district. This often means that I kicked in his front door at one time or another – which isn’t as bad as it sounds, since we’ve kicked in a lot of doors in our efforts to clear out the insurgents, and the Iraqis know it’s nothing personal – but this time it turns out that his dad was “Red Turban Guy.”

I really liked Red Turban Guy. He was an old man whose name we did not know at first who

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would always talk to us on our patrols and offer us cigarettes while he worked outside his house with his grown sons. I guess this guy remembered me from one of my conversations with his dad.

The insurgents beheaded Red Turban Guy a few months after we arrived. He had spoken critically about them to his neighbors. I think it's safe to assume that the water in his son's eyes when I told him I was sorry to hear about his dad was genuine, and I doubt that he would knowingly work alongside his father's murderers. When this balding, middle-aged man tells me he wants to fight al-Qaeda, I believe him.

Today, police officers in clean blue uniforms man checkpoints and roll by our convoys in new blue-and-white trucks with machine guns mounted in the beds. They wave. I wave back. It's possible some of them were shooting at us a year ago, but they're not shooting at us now, and that's all I can afford to care about. If we had to kill everybody who had ever shot at us in the past, we would never get out of here. A lot of them would probably shoot at us again if it were in their best interest, just as we would kill them without remorse if they rejoined the insurgency, but it's become obvious that it is in neither of our best interests.

Yesterday I took a convoy across the city to Camp Ramadi, a large installation on the west side of the city that is home to the Marine headquarters here as well as the 1st Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division. As we traveled down Route Michigan, once known as the most dangerous stretch of highway in Iraq, the changes were obvious and remarkable.

Groups of men and boys work alongside the road. One bunch has collected up enormous piles of twisted rebar from buildings demolished by tanks, missiles and explosions. A young man in a track suit and sandals uses a sledgehammer to straighten the iron while another group removes busted concrete from an emptying lot. There's no telling what will be here in a year, but at least it won't be a demolished building looking like something from the final scene of "Saving Private Ryan."

Among the most common sights in Iraq are the huge concrete barriers that line every road and



Female Iraqi police officers fire pistols under the watchful eye of U.S. Marines from the II Marine Expeditionary Force at the pistol range on Joint Security Station Iron in Ramadi. DoD

surround every installation. They are known as Alaska, Texas or Jersey barriers, depending on their relative size. Most scattered through the city are of the waist-high Jersey type, redirecting traffic and blocking roads and entrances. Iraqi flags, plants and flowers, pro-Iraqi slogans, and decoration and designs on white backgrounds now cover the dirty gray concrete, although they can't completely cover the bullet holes.

Across the highway, people have strung wires with dozens of Iraqi flags flapping and twisting in the wind. Iraqis are sometimes said to lack a strong sense of national identity. You would never think that of Ramadi. Even the curbs are now painted. For miles outside the city, the median is an alternating yellow and white, adding color – and a visible sign of progress – to a city that desperately needed it.

As I walked between the guard posts tonight, the audio speakers across the city issued the nightly call to prayer, stretching "Allahu Akbar" into 15 or 20 undulating syllables. Call me crazy, and I know a lot of guys hate it, but I like the sound sometimes, especially in the evening as the sun sets. It's a haunting, exotic sound, and to me it sounds sad and lonely and eternally associated with warfare. The power is on across most of the city, and the mosques are strung with thousands of lights for Ramadan. It's the first Ramadan in recent memory that hasn't been a nightmare of blood, violence and death here in Ramadi. Hopefully it won't be the last. 🌿

Sgt. 1st Class Jack Robison is a U.S. Army infantry platoon sergeant with D Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, deployed to Ar Ramadi, Iraq.

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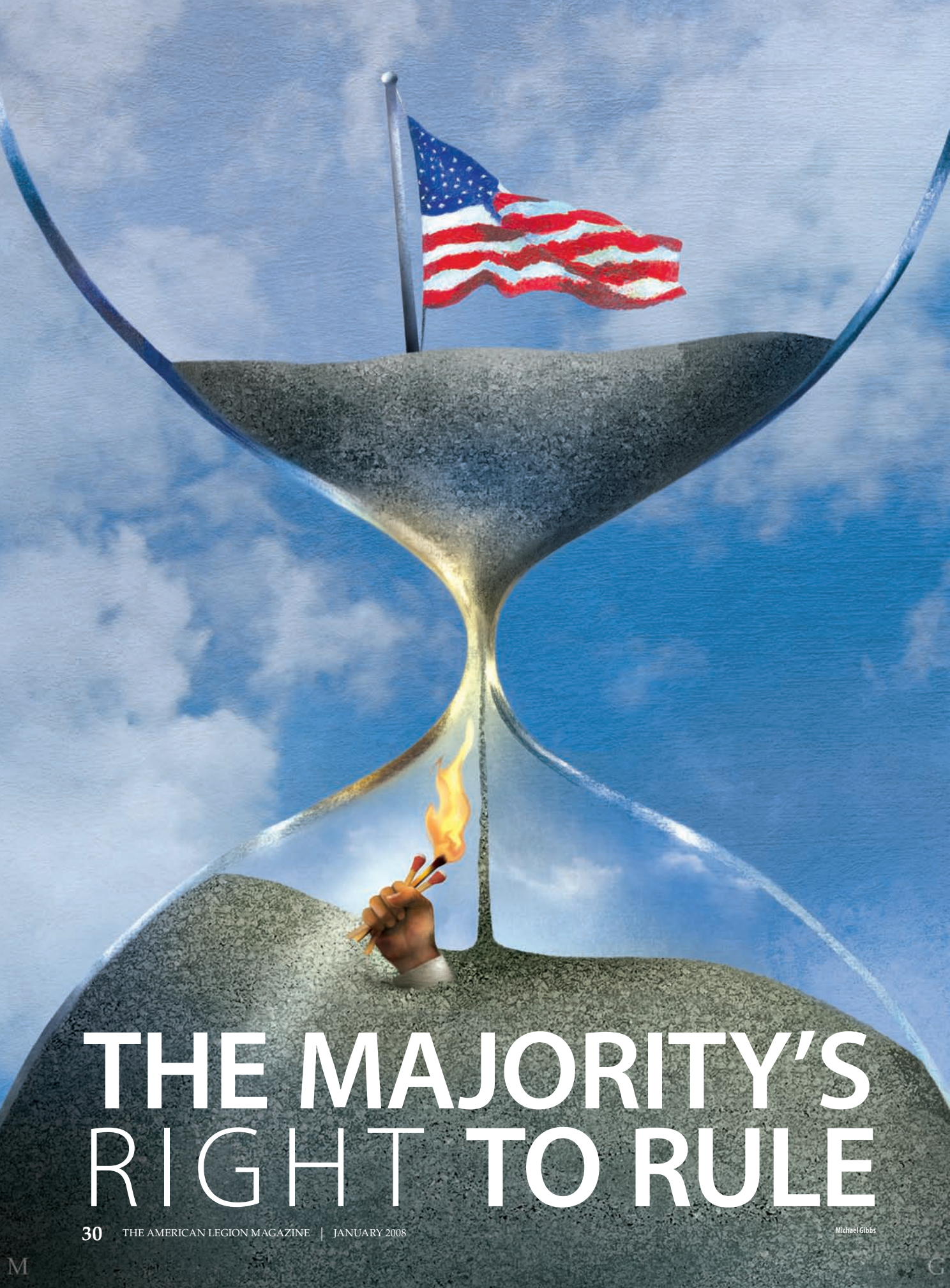
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THE MAJORITY'S RIGHT TO RULE

Why the power to protect our flag will eventually be reclaimed by the American people.

BY RICHARD PARKER

The right of the people to protect the American flag will be restored. It will happen eventually, one way or another. Just how and when it will happen is, at the moment, unknown.

The current lull in the campaign for restoration of this right offers an opportunity, however, to see what we do know. In the heat of any struggle – political, military, even personal – the very shape of the struggle, and so its likely course, tends to elude us. By imagining how future historians will

COMMENTARY

look back on what has happened so far, we may see the way ahead.

Historians will put our struggle over the flag into context. They will describe the dynamics that have shaped it, and they will describe its significance in the story of modern America. Anticipating their retrospective perspective, let's look at the ongoing dispute in three contexts: proceeding from a tight focus on particular events, then to a middle-distance consideration of broader political and cultural forces at work, and finally to a panorama of the broadest movements of contemporary U.S. history.

As particular events are unfolding, we tend to suppose that whatever happens was bound to happen – or, by contrast, that it was somehow our own responsibility. That ignores what historians call “contingency” – chances, for example, of timing, of the coincidence of separate occurrences, and even of personality.

Take the 1989 and 1990 Supreme Court decisions that overturned a longstanding practice of protecting the flag. If the case had come before the court five years earlier – before justices Scalia and Kennedy joined it – or five years later, after the conservative concern about “speech codes” had begun to wane, it probably would have come out differently. Once handed down, however, the decision was more or less locked in, unexpectedly transferring the issue to Congress and the people.

Consider next what has happened in Congress over the past 18 years. Time after time, overwhelming majorities in both houses supported restoring protection of the flag. But in the Senate those majorities fell just short, last year by one vote, of 67 needed to send a constitutional amendment to the states. If one senatorial election had turned out differently, the result could easily have been different. Indeed, if just one of two original cosponsors of the amendment had not switched – due to stated concerns about separate matters, such as campaign-finance reform (Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.) and the fall of the ancient Roman republic (Robert Byrd, D-W.Va.) – it would have passed in 2006.

Such ill luck ought not be discouraging. The question is whether you contain its effects and turn good luck to advantage. Judging by results, the campaign for the flag amendment has done both. Other amendments proposed at the same time and once widely supported – on a balanced budget and school prayer, for instance – have fallen by the wayside. Only the flag amendment has sustained popular support over two decades.

Why, then, hasn't it been easier? In answer, we've got to switch to a middle-distance perspective on deeper forces and deeper trends. Here, we confront what is really surprising, and what will make the flag-amendment campaign fascinating to historians for hundreds of years.

Consider the basic story. In 1989, when President George H.W. Bush called for a constitutional amendment to correct the Supreme Court's decision, he seemed to be pushing on an open door. Congressional sentiment, following popular sentiment, was not simply in favor of flag protection; it appeared unstoppable. Events then took a strange turn. A passel of law professors claimed that an amendment wasn't needed. A new statute, they said, would satisfy the court. With suspicious eagerness,

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Congress jumped at the bait. Nearly unanimously, it enacted a new statute to protect the flag. The court struck it down immediately. As if on cue, liberal Democrats, who had been supporters of flag protection, turned around. They came out as opponents, and they frustrated further consideration of the issue for several years.

In 1995, they lost control of Congress. The door seemed open again. The issue got a new hearing. Popular support for the cause had not diminished. In fact, the legislatures of all 50 states passed memorializing resolutions in favor of a constitutional amendment. But opponents of protecting the American flag managed to forestall the amendment for 12 more years. The historical question is what motivated, and what enabled, them to do so.

The change was rooted in a century-long shift from local to national-oriented elites; then from social, economic and political to education-based elites; and finally toward elites defined by ideology (“we are better because we have better values”). The new elites were oriented in large part to cosmopolitan rather than national concerns, imagining themselves as “citizens of the world.”

The upshot has involved, on one hand, an increasing separation of elites from the mass of citizens. On the other hand, it has also involved an increasing influence of these elites defined by their ideas, over ideas fundamental to our political culture.

Take, first, the idea of popular sovereignty. Its locus is the Constitution. “We the people” are not just the first words of the document. Through the first two-thirds of the past century, they were taken seriously. Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, among others, enthusiastically opposed the pretension of judges to interpret the Constitution in ultimate defiance of popular will. Backed by most of the people and a powerful segment of the educated elites of their day, they prevailed.

By 1965, a change was under way. The ideological elites were becoming ardent fans of judicial supremacy. They were moved by support for the Warren Court’s decisions, especially on civil rights, despite the fact that real progress toward racial equality depended in the end on ordinary politics. Soon, they idealized the court, perhaps in part because it was an arena in which people like them seemed to hold sway. Their judicial idolatry gradually seeped through the subsoil of “informed” opinion to undermine the foundation of popular sovereignty.

The flag amendment exposed that idolatry. Like

other proposed amendments, it was meant to put in action the old idea of popular sovereignty. It was, however, the first in some time – the first likely to pass – to confront what was said to be a progressive decision of the Supreme Court.



So, opponents put it down as tinkering with the Constitution. It usurped the role of judges, they said. Thus it exposed the transformation of elite opinion that, gradually, had occurred since the time of Franklin Roosevelt, and it revealed the powerful influence of that opinion within the liberal wing of what was once Roosevelt’s party.

Next, consider the idea of patriotism. For much of the past century, it was a sentiment of popular solidarity. It was not controversial. It evoked pride among a people of many views who, despite their differences, ruled themselves. It embodied faith in an ongoing practice of democracy. It bore fruit not just in wars, hot and cold, but in the New Deal’s fight against economic insecurity and in the early civil-rights movement. Like other powerful sentiments, its power was compressed into, and evoked by, a symbol: the flag. Just as most Americans felt the sentiment, so did they honor the symbol as – let us say it – something practically sacred.

Around 1965, that began to change. Among the mass of the people, of course, there was little change. But among the ideological elite, there was. They were patriotic, to be sure. However, they tended to re-imagine patriotism. For them, it was not so much a popular sentiment. Nor was it about an actual, ongoing practice of democracy. Rather, it was a matter of abstract ideals – ideals which they undertook, on their own, to define and apply. They emphasized pride in the “America that could be,” according to their own point of view.

In opposition to the Vietnam War, they abandoned the outlook of the early civil-rights movement. They gave up, for a time, on the flag. They identified it not with the nation, but with the government or its policies. They depicted it as the symbol of one point of view, one they opposed.

More recent years have shown that among ordinary Americans the sentiments of patriotism and reverence for the flag are still alive. But in the precincts of “enlightened” people, and among those influenced by them, these sentiments have seemed like lead paint on the walls. Faith in an empowered people cannot much appeal to them if they are to empower themselves.

So it was, in 1989 and 1990, that five members of

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By John Fleming

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the Supreme Court held that it is unconstitutional to single out the flag for protection. The flag, they said, represents one point of view, a controversial point of view. The law, they said, may not favor expression of such a point of view. The elite's redefinition of patriotism had prevailed.

Those who hope to restore protection to the flag did not, at first, grasp the novelty and influence of this idea. They took at face value politicians' protestations of support for the traditional understanding of the flag and of patriotism. They were in for a surprise. For, as certain politicians voted against flag protection and even expressed disdain for it, the subterranean shift in our political culture was manifest.

Finally, take the idea of political equality. This, along with popular sovereignty, is the basis of democracy. Every citizen, every voter, is the equal of every other. They may not be equal in everything that can be measured, in wealth or background or experience. But equals they are, nonetheless, as a matter of the right to rule.

There was a time, around the middle of the 20th century, when this equality was widely recognized and widely felt. With the rise of the ideological elite, this began to change. To them, all politics were a kind of identity politics; it was about their own identity. They were often devoted to the abstract ideal of equality. They were for the right to vote. But, when it came to ruling, they thought they should do it. The mark of their superiority was their "enlightened" views. What defined their views as enlightened? On one hand, it was their imitation of one another – and, on the other, their difference from the views of the "unenlightened" public. Such behavior is familiar enough. It is not, after all, confined to social cliques in high school.

When the flag amendment was proposed, the identity politics of the ideological elite signalled the pose to strike. The mass of Americans were on one side of this "civil liberties" issue. They, then, had to be on the other side. Famous as critics of prejudice, they acted on prejudice, one utterly at odds with democracy. Who, at the time, knew what we were up against?

This, however, is not the end of the story. Step even further back and look, from another angle, at the controversy and the political culture in which it has been embroiled. Look at it from the perspective of the great panorama of U.S. history. From this angle, the ultimate conclusion is assured. For it is, at bottom, a struggle for the extension of political

democracy. Such struggles, through our history, have come out one way. Sometimes the issue has been the inclusion of a group in our political community. Sometimes it has involved the empowerment of the people, through their representatives, to govern discriminatory behavior or the abuse of economic power. Intense battles have been waged,

often for decades. They have taken twists and turns that no one anticipated. In the end, however, democracy has been extended every time.

This struggle may, at first, seem different. How can it be compared to the enfranchisement of blacks? Or forbidding discrimination against women? Or to the regulation

of economic power? How could it be as important as those issues? And isn't it different because it is about the judicial definition of a constitutional right – the right to burn a flag?

In fact, however, every single one of the prior issues involved a struggle against a judicial definition of constitutional rights. In each instance, the judicial definition – of rights to exclude or discriminate or exploit – appeared well-established. In each instance, it was ultimately overcome.

What is more, the struggle over the flag amendment is comparable to the ones over prejudice against women or the disenfranchisement of blacks. It is, as we've seen, a campaign against deep-seated prejudice. It is a challenge – like the one leveled by feminists – not to prejudice by a majority against a minority but the other way around: the prejudice of a minority against a majority. Although what is at stake is not the right to vote, it is equally fundamental: the right of a majority to rule. Without that, the right to vote is an empty one.

Why is it that these struggles for the extension of democracy are ultimately won, in one way or another? Because Americans will not stand for being treated as inferiors.

The campaign to restore the right to protect the American flag may not have begun with all this in mind. It may not have begun as a struggle to extend – and, so, to redeem – our democracy. But that is what it has become. 🌿

Richard D. Parker is the Williams Professor of Law at Harvard Law School and the author of "Here, the People Rule: A Constitutional Populist Manifesto."



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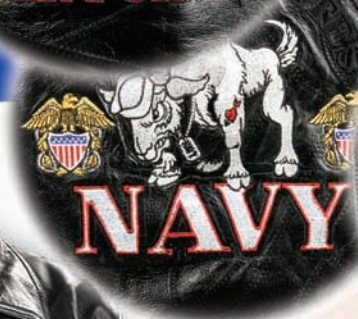
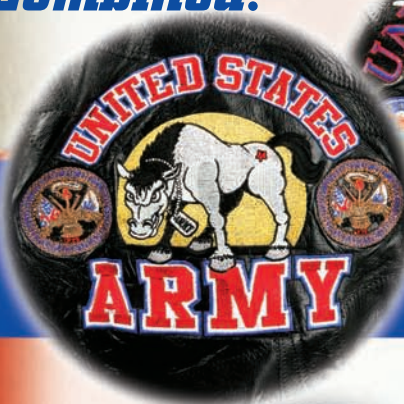
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DAD vs. BEAST

Former Marine acts without fear to protect sons.

BY RICHARD DAIGLE

Chris Everhart was not seriously worried when a camper from a nearby site asked if he and his boys had seen the mother bear and her cubs. Black bears are common in Georgia's Chattahoochee National Forest and not usually harmful. At the same time, the 36-year-old former Marine knew that no wild animal, particularly one defending offspring, should be taken lightly. In the end, it was the bear who should have thought about that. "In the back of my mind I'm thinking, 'If I've got mama bears and cubs, I've got to watch these kids,'" the 36-year-old former U.S. Marine explained.

It was a Saturday, Father's Day weekend. Everhart and his three sons – Jake, 11, Kyle, 9, and Logan, 6 – unpacked their Jeep at a campsite in the national forest about 90 minutes north of Atlanta. It was their first family campout.

The sky was blue and the temperature mild. Their particular spot in the campground was bordered with cross-ties. It included a picnic table, a permanent fire pit and grill. Everhart and his boys were pleased as they looked it over after setting up. And they were intrigued when their neighbor camper asked about the mama bear and her cubs.

KILLER BEARS

Chris Everhart's ice cooler attracted a foraging bear to his family's Georgia campsite. Soon, he found himself in a confrontation with the animal.

Photo courtesy Chris Everhart

The family soon headed down to the river to fish alongside other anglers, and there they saw first-hand what the fuss was about: a female black bear was visible just downstream, waiting for fishermen to clean their catches so she could eat the heads and guts while her cubs played and climbed trees.

The Everharts felt they were a safe distance away. He took pictures of the boys with the bears in the background. "They were getting a kick out of it," he said.

A young boy from a different family then threw a stick at the mother bear. She let out a menacing grunt. Everhart decided to play it safe and move to another part of the river.

"While we're fishing, here comes a male black bear doing some foraging," he said. "Once he started coming up the bank, I said, 'We've got to go.'"

Unaware that only a few days earlier, a black bear had killed an 11-year-old boy in Utah, Everhart believed that his sons had seen enough bears for one day and led them back to camp for a dinner of hamburgers and potatoes. After eating, they washed their utensils and began cleaning up the site. As darkness fell, they heard strange, loud noises not far away – a clanging sound.

"Throughout the early evening you could hear people beating pots and pans to scare bears off," he said. One camper's dog tangled with a bear. Another camper who apparently had been drink-



ing tried to chase one of the bears away. Everhart remained calm. As a Marine MP from 1990 to 1998, he routinely faced stressful, dangerous situations with violent, sometimes intoxicated or drugged individuals.

"There were times it took three of us to bring down one person," he recalled. "I came close to shooting many people. I had a pistol in their ear telling them if they moved they were dead."

Everhart thought he had packed everything up at their campsite. But he forgot one small cooler that contained bottled water, a pack of sausage, one beer, and some bottles of ketchup and mustard.

It's rare, but it happens. In the past 100 years, no more than 52 fatal black-bear attacks have been documented in North America, according to various sources. However, 14 of those deaths – more

than 25 percent – occurred between 2000 and mid-2007. Victims range in age from five months to 93 years, from New Mexico to Alaska.

Black bears appear poised to overtake browns for the first time

this decade. Only five fatal attacks by brown bears, including grizzlies, have been recorded since 2000. Eight of the 13 fatal bear attacks of the 1990s and seven of nine in the 1980s were caused by brown bears.

About 9:30 p.m., a female black bear spotted the cooler. "It was perfectly quiet and then suddenly there was a big crash, and I thought, 'What in the world is that?'" he said. "It dawned on me that a bear just grabbed our cooler and took off with it."

Everhart immediately ran toward his vehicle to get pots and pans to bang and run the bear off, but then he saw something that will never leave his memory. His 6-year-old son, armed with a shovel, was moving toward the 275-pound bear, still clutching the cooler.

"I see Logan on the other side of the tent coming out with a shovel," he said. "I don't know what was going through his mind, but I saw him and then I saw the bear. When the bear saw Logan with that shovel, she dropped the cooler and started making her way toward him with her head down, growling."

There was no time for Everhart to get his pistol in the Jeep. His only hope was a piece of firewood about a foot and a half long.

The bear was just a few strides away, moving at an angle toward Logan. The former Marine reached for the log and heaved it, end over end, as hard as he could.

"I didn't even think. It was right there ... I was not afraid. You have your fight-or-flee moments; I was on fight the whole way. The adrenaline was rushing. My intention was to send it across her head. It wasn't really to hurt the animal. I just wanted it to go by its face quickly."

Instead, the log struck the bear flush in the head at full force. Everhart could not believe what he had done. The animal staggered and dropped. "Two things went through my mind. First, 'Wow, that's cool. I knocked out a bear with a stick.' But then I thought, 'Now I have an injured bear,' so I said, 'Kids, get in the Jeep now!'"

"It was just a perfect throw," Everhart said. "I could never ever do it again. I'm dead-on

with a pistol or rifle, but I'm terrible at throwing a baseball."

Over a dozen other campers came to investigate. Only after Georgia Department of Natural Resources rangers arrived did the family learn the Marine dad had killed the bear he intended to scare off.

"I don't even hunt," Everhart said later. "I don't have a problem with it because most of the time it's necessary to thin out a herd or the whole will suffer, but I enjoy animals."

When the excitement died down, DNR officials issued Everhart a \$75 citation for leaving a cooler exposed.

"I should have been cited," he explained. "I didn't have a grudge or bad feeling about it."

If harm had come to young Logan, it would have been a first in Georgia history. Georgia DNR Region Supervisor Ken Riddleberger said that although the bear population in Georgia has grown to upwards of 3,000, "we do not have a recorded incident of a bear attack in Georgia. By bear attack, I am referring to someone suffering harm from a wild bear."

When the family returned from their Father's Day weekend camping trip, a local Atlanta television station aired their astonishing story. That led to more stories and eventually

national media attention. The phone rang constantly. CNN, Fox News and ABC's "Good Morning America" all told the story of the Everhart camping trip. Some reporters asked Everhart if he considered himself a hero. He does not.

"I was just doing what I hope any father would do for his kids. Heroes to me are firefighters, police officers, servicemen," he said. "Every day every one of them is a hero to me."

His sons, he said, learned a life lesson that evening in the national forest. "You've got to respect nature. We were very lucky. This could have ended up totally wrong. We got lucky." 🌿

Richard Daigle is a freelance writer.



Use bear-proof food-storage containers.
Store items inside a vehicle if possible.
Do not cook or store food in or near your tent.
Pack away all trash.
Hang items that give off an odor (food, garbage, toothpaste, soap, etc.) at least 10 feet from the ground and four feet away from the nearest tree trunk or limb.
If you see a bear in the distance, relax, but do not approach or feed the bear. If a bear is close, make it aware of your presence by yelling and making noises.
Although it may seem harmless at the time, feeding a bear will cause it to lose its natural fear of humans and thus become dangerous. If you encounter an aggressive or non-yielding bear, move to safety and notify authorities at once.

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources

“My Husband’s **SECRET** ... for Amazing **INTIMACY!**”

I just had to tell your readers about a recent experience I shared with my husband. First, let me just say he is a wonderful man. But, after being married for all these years, it seemed he was having confidence issues lately in AND out of bed. It was having a real negative effect on his virility and let's face it, it's not like we're newlyweds anymore.

Thankfully, we didn't have to deal with an embarrassing doctor's appointment or prescription, because everything changed a few days ago. I came home from work and something was different. He seemed more confident and excited than he'd been lately. He said he had found something that could help improve our recent bedroom issues, but it was a surprise. He had read about it online and we decided to give it a try. Well all I can say is I definitely felt sensations I'd never felt before ... in places I forgot existed. Best of all, there was clearly a difference in his erection quality and confidence. I can honestly say it was the most incredible experience I've ever had in my entire life.

When I asked him to reveal his secret discovery – he wouldn't. So I did some snooping. It didn't take me long to figure it out. In his top drawer was a tube of **Maxoderm CONNECTION**. After reading the fine print and finding the website, I went online to www.maxodermct.com to discover more about this magic in a tube.

Maxoderm CONNECTION (of which I'm having my husband buy a lifetime supply) is a lotion that is applied topically to the most “intimate areas”. A delicate blend of ingredients, it helps improve stimulation directly at the source – that's when amazing things start to happen. Now he experiences improved erection quality and the feeling of firmness and I experience more pleasure and sensation than ever before! We aren't into taking pills of any kind – not even aspirin – so I was relieved to find he was using something topical without any potential systemic side effects you may experience with prescriptions. Unless you want to think of incredible intimacy as a side effect, because with **Maxoderm CONNECTION**, you just may experience incredible intimacy time and time again!

So ... please print this letter. Anyone who wants to experience amazing intimacy has to try **Maxoderm CONNECTION**. They need to tell their husbands about this product. Or just “accidentally” leave a tube lying around for them to “accidentally” find. I really want to thank the makers who developed **Maxoderm CONNECTION** for making a product that's had such an impact on our intimate relationship. It's really made a difference.

T.J.

T.J.
Phoenix, AZ

*P.S., Let your readers know I'm pretty sure they can still get a **FREE MONTH SUPPLY** of **Maxoderm CONNECTION** with their order by calling **1-800-903-7102** or by visiting their website at www.maxodermct.com, and **FOR A LIMITED TIME**, you can still get **\$200 worth of FREE GIFTS** with your order that are yours to keep. Oh and even better, their product is backed by a **90 Day Full Money Back Guarantee**.



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incredible
experience
I've ever had in
my entire life.”



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SEN. DANIEL AKAKA:

The Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs quietly came into existence at the dawn of a calamitous year, 1970, when the world's attention was trained critically on America. Political anxiety was running high in Washington, where the Democrats controlled Congress and an embattled Republican occupied the White House. As U.S. troops were entering their sixth full year of fighting a controversial war in Asia, an emerging generation of young veterans was coming

INTERVIEW

home with health problems no one would understand for at least a decade, if ever.

At the time, a separate new legislative committee to focus purely on the needs of military veterans made more sense than the erstwhile situation, where the Senate's business with those who'd served their country in uniform had been relegated to the agendas of the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. The House of Representatives had a 23-year head start, having formed its distinct veterans affairs committee shortly after World War II.

Today, 38 years after Indiana Democrat Vance Hartke dropped the gavel that gave veterans a place of their own in both houses of Congress, the relationship appears to have come full circle between the federal government and those who served in its armed forces.

The number of Americans already discharged from military service in the global war on terrorism is now approaching 1 million. The majority of veterans from World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam, meanwhile, are now either nearing or well into their retirement years, filling VA health-care facilities and nursing homes past capacity. Gulf War Illness is as little understood today as Agent Orange exposure was in the 1970s. A growing backlog of unresolved VA benefits claims today stands at more than 400,000. Appointment delays and waiting times continue to mount at VA hospitals and clinics, while authorized construc-



Getty

tion projects await real dollars. And the war continues to generate more VA-eligible veterans, many of them combat-exposed, physically or mentally disabled, and looking squarely to their elected leaders in Washington for help.

This is the situation faced by 83-year-old Hawaii Democrat Daniel J. Akaka, a World War II veteran of the Army Corps of Engineers and the eighth chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. Akaka recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine* at his Washington office about the committee's approach to the second half of the 110th Congress.

BRING VA UP TO DATE

Q: *The volume of legislation handled by the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has increased dramatically in recent years, from just 62 bills in the 106th Congress to more than 100 only halfway through the 110th. Is that by design?*

A: This committee has been very aggressive in trying to meet the needs of veterans, of all veterans, World War II up to the present. Because of those needs, we have had to be very aggressive. When we started out, we planned to do two hearings a month. Well, we have had as many as five a month. The members, I will tell you also, have been very active in the affairs of VA, as well as veteran problems in their own home states.

Q: *How important is it to check your party affiliation at the door when you work on a committee like this?*

A: For me, that's very, very important. As chairman of the committee, I have tried to put this ahead of whatever the committee does – bipartisanship. I feel the concern should be about the veterans and not about partisanship. And I think the committee members feel that way. So we've been really moving. The problem we have is, once we get it out of committee, getting it to the floor.

Q: *How do you think the committee will be affected with a new ranking Republican, Sen. Richard Burr, who replaced former Chairman Larry Craig?*

A: He's been on the committee, and we both commit to work together in a bipartisan manner. So that's what I am looking for.

Q: *Senate Veterans Affairs Committee hearings often are not well-attended by members themselves, two of whom – Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama – are now on the presidential campaign trail.*

A: The problem we have in the Senate is that members are busy. As a result, they are not able to attend all of our meetings and our hearings. But I want to tell you that the spirit, the energy and the interest is there.

Q: *How is the 110th Congress living up to veterans' expectations?*

A: First, we are going back to including the (veteran service organizations) more in what we do here. I feel personally that the VSOs are partners in what we try to do to help veterans. We need feedback from the VSOs – their experi-

ence, their legacy, their passion. I feel that's a major step, including them back as partners in what we do.

When we assumed the leadership here, it was clear that there were areas where we needed to work. One of the first areas was funding. As a result, what we have now (the VA budget passed by the House and Senate veterans affairs committees) exceeded the budget of last year by \$6.5 billion. That's a lot. When I say a lot, that's the most we've ever had before from the committee. It was \$3.6 billion over the president's budget. I want to continue to increase it. As a matter of fact, I want to find ways of tagging (the VA budget) onto the cost of war, rather than standing in line with the rest of the committees for whatever funds we have to distribute. As a result, it will bring resources to us that we need to really take care of veterans.

Q: *How do you see VA health-care demand changing?*

A: It's going to increase. Today, as we know, we are saving so many lives on the field that we lost in former wars, because our training is so much better. But as we save them, we've got to take care of them. Some of them need a lot of help to stay alive. We need funding to do that.

Q: *You support lifting the current new-enrollment suspension of Priority Group 8 VA patients. How can that be accomplished?*

A: We've taken steps in committee to do that. We have passed it in an omnibus bill, to bring back the middle-income veterans who were eliminated from enrollment. The other part (of the bill) is to increase the mileage fee, so it will be better – not sufficient, but we're increasing it.

Q: *The bigger remedy, it seems, is mandatory or assured funding for VA health care.*

A: No question. We need it for the veterans. It's what I mean when I talk about the cost of war.

Q: *Do you foresee a dollars-per-veteran formula for VA health-care funding?*

A: That's a possibility. Right now, I am trying to set up an authorization that would give us that level of funding rather than standing in line with the rest of the committees. If we could get an authorization for the cost of war, we would do better than we are now.

Q: *At one point not long ago, VA was reportedly collecting less than 50 cents of every dollar it billed to insurance companies. What can be done to improve VA's efficiency in such areas?*

A: We know that a lot needs to be done. Our committee has put a priority on oversight. I have been sending staff around the nation and getting direct information. This has helped us with our legislation. Members have had hearings in their states. Sen. (Sherrod) Brown went back to Ohio with our staff and had hearings there. The senator from Montana, (Jon) Tester, went with our staff. Sen. (Patty) Murray from Washington and Sen. Johnny Isakson from Georgia – these senators are so grateful to have our staff with them. They say, “Hey, thanks so much for that.” They are bringing back information that can help us restructure VA.

Q: *You propose a full restructuring of VA?*

A: We've got to change the structure from the World War II structure up to the Iraq structure. We've got to bring it up to date.

Q: *You just received a report on waiting times at VA facilities. Apparently, VA has understated the amount of time veterans are forced to wait for their appointments. You described the report as “disturbing.” What drove you to call for the study?*

A: We have been hearing from veterans all across the nation about waiting times. The reports we have received from our staffs have not been good. Terrible, about what's happening out there. It gives a good idea of what kind of restructuring needs to come about. This is what we're working on.

What's been coming up recently – PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and TBI (traumatic brain injury) – I'm working on as a category I call “invisible wounds,” different from physical wounds. The thing about this is we need new policies for invisible wounds. Some of the veterans, even after they return – maybe two years have gone by – go back and say, “Hey, I'm having a problem.” And they are being asked, “Is it service-connected?” TBI and PTSD are a different kind of thing. We need new policies in there so that when they come in for help there will be no question.

Q: *Do you think the delays are attributable simply to too many new patients and not enough providers?*

A: This is where restructuring comes in. They have to devise a different system of dealing with this.

Q: *Veterans often complain that VA care varies too greatly depending on where you live.*

A: This is something VA really needs to work on, to equalize service quality throughout the country. We need to continue to work on this as we change secretaries. As soon as we have a new person on, we need to continue with restructuring, with funding, with oversight.

Q: *What other legislative priorities do you see heading into the second half of the session?*

A: One is the GI Bill. There is an effort to update it, which is a good idea. That is something we will be working on. The GI Bill needs restructuring – very important – with more balance and better quality of service, directly to the veterans.

Q: *Even if they were National Guard or reserve?*

A: We want to be sure, at least for now, that those who were deployed would receive this kind of service. We have to take care of the Guard and reserve, when they go back home and go back to their jobs. Sometimes they have problems with the workplace, as well as with families. We need to help them with these problems.

Q: *What about the federal government's poor record of living up to the law that mandates no less than 3 percent of government contracts be awarded to companies owned by service-disabled veterans?*

A: Our staff needs to check on that and see where it is now, with the hope of trying to draft something that could improve it.

Q: *It seems this is a committee facing many priorities.*

A: The other big thing is the claims backlog. And funding. We have our work cut out for us. We will be busy this year. 🌿

Interview: Jeff Stoffer

Akaka on the flag amendment

Q: *Sen. Akaka, you consistently vote against legislation that would protect the U.S. Flag from desecration. Can you explain your position?*

A: My position about flag burning has been the effect it would have on the Constitution. I've always been on the side of giving citizens the right of expression. I would tell you I don't like flag burning, but for me to say that no citizen can voice themselves in a way – I just back up a little bit. Personally, I don't like it. Legally, what affects the rights of citizens causes me to back up.

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Brig. Gen. Paul W. Tibbets, pilot and commander of the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, died Nov. 1. Corbis

'No shame in saving lives'

Paul W. Tibbets Jr. died Nov. 1 at age 92, still proud of flying the mission that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, an act that shortened World War II by precluding an invasion of Japan in which hundreds of thousands of U.S. servicemen certainly would have been killed.

In his final interviews, the famed pilot of the *Enola Gay* had no regrets about carrying out the Aug. 6, 1945, attack that ultimately resulted in the deaths of nearly 200,000 people. Three days later, a second bomb exploded over Nagasaki, instantly killing 39,000 Japanese and hastening a surrender.

"Understand, the job of every wartime soldier, sailor, Marine or airman is to win, and win as quickly as possible," Tibbets said in the August 2005 *American Legion Magazine*. "The way I look at it, 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man' saved more than a million lives. There's no shame in that. There's no shame in saving lives."

Tibbets enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1937. He trained on PT-3s and BT-9s at Randolph Field in Texas, graduating at the top of his class. In February 1938, he reported to Fort Benning, Ga., where he flew O-46 and O-47 observation planes and B-10 bombers. He also became friends with then-Lt. Col. George Patton, on the skeet range.

When Tibbets heard the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, he was a mile above Georgia in the Army's new A-20 attack bomber. Nine months later, he led a dozen B-17 Flying Fortresses in the first daylight raid by a U.S. bombing squadron on German-occupied Europe. In November 1942, he flew Eisenhower from England to Gibraltar before participating in the North Africa campaign.

The general sat on a two-by-four board in the cockpit for a pilot's-eye view of the flight.

In September 1944, Tibbets was briefed on the Manhattan Project creation of an atomic bomb to end the war. Over the previous year, he had become an expert on Boeing's B-29 Super Fortress bomber. Now he would organize and train a unit – the 509th Composite Group – to deliver the weapon from it.

That historic August morning, on the return flight from Hiroshima, Tibbets rejoiced at the possibility that the atomic bomb would now make future wars unthinkable. And for the rest of his life, he viewed such weapons as a war deterrent.

Tibbets retired from the military in 1966 as a brigadier general. Until his death, he defended the bombing, even denouncing the script for a planned Smithsonian *Enola Gay* exhibit in 1995 as an apology for a mission that needed none.

"For every American soldier who thanked me for being a part of the mission that spared him being part of a second D-Day against the deeply entrenched Japanese, I have been thanked, as well, by Japanese veterans who would have been expected to carry out a suicidal defense of the home islands," Tibbets wrote in 1998. "I am content that we did what reason compelled and what duty dictated."

Tibbets reportedly didn't want a funeral or headstone, fearing it would give protesters a place to demonstrate. Instead, he wanted his ashes scattered over the North Atlantic, where he loved flying. 🌿

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[VERBATIM]

"If soldiers want to read that stuff, they can walk down the street and buy it somewhere else."

Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., criticizing the Pentagon's determination that *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines are not "sexually explicit" and can be sold on military bases

"The idea that the federal government should fund a museum that celebrates a 38-year-old concert is simply absurd."

Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., on a proposal to earmark \$1 million for a Woodstock Music and Art Fair museum. The Senate voted 52-42 to remove it from a health and education spending bill.

"That is not a drug. It's a leaf."

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, after a *GQ* interviewer asked him about the 1977 documentary "Pumping Iron," which showed him smoking marijuana

"I don't want to be invited to the family hunting party."

Presidential candidate Barack Obama, responding to claims that he's a distant relative of Vice President Dick Cheney, who wounded a friend in a 2006 hunting accident

"If this were a movie, this is when the scary music would start."

Heritage Foundation economist David John, on the crisis facing Social Security as baby boomers began filing for benefits in October

[BY THE NUMBERS]

CAMPAIGN CASH

After just nine months of official fund-raising, presidential candidates took in \$420 million, putting the 2008 field "on track to collect an unprecedented \$1 billion" by the end of this perpetual campaign, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Here's how the final financial reports posted in 2007 look:

| CANDIDATE | TOTAL RAISED |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Hillary Clinton | \$90,935,788 |
| Barack Obama | \$80,256,427 |
| Mitt Romney | \$62,829,069 |
| Rudy Giuliani | \$47,253,521 |
| John McCain | \$32,124,785 |
| John Edwards | \$30,329,152 |
| Bill Richardson | \$18,699,937 |
| Chris Dodd | \$13,598,152 |
| Fred Thompson | \$12,828,111 |

[ACTIVE DUTY]

TREASURED TRIP

Series of coin exchanges makes for a memorable mission.

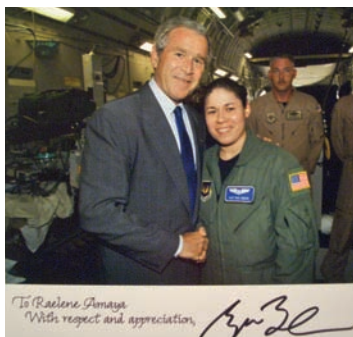
**BY AIR FORCE
TECH. SGT. (SEL)
RAELENE
AMAYA**

ON JULY 10, I was assigned to a mission that from the get-go was special because the chief master sergeant of the Air Force was on it. Chief Rodney McKinley had been at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, for a visit and wanted to go back on an aerovac mission to see what we do. Ours was the one he chose. I was the third technician that day, so my assigned seat was all the way forward, left side. The chief sat right next to me, and over the course of an 8-hour trip we got to talk a lot. Just as I suspected, he is a humble, down-to-earth man. It was an honor to chat it up with him.

About halfway through the mission, I asked him if he collected coins. (I wanted to give him mine.)

He kind of laughed and said he had about 1,300 of them. These coins are a military tradition of pride. Every squadron has its own design. They make good souvenirs. Of course, being the chief master sergeant of the Air Force, McKinley had his own coin, along with dozens of others. He pulled out a bag and showed me a handful just from the few days he had been at Ramstein. I was like a little kid looking at candy. I asked him if he had received a coin from my squadron. He said no. I always keep a squadron coin in the patch on my sleeve, so I pulled off my patch and gave it to him so he would remember our mission, which involved transporting back to the United States about 25 wounded warriors who had just come out of the war. I was putting the patch back on my arm when he said, "Wait a minute. We have to replace it. How about I give you mine? I think that's a fair trade." He pulled out his coin and handed it to me, and for a minute I couldn't say a word. I tried not to smile too much.

When we arrived at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, the load master came over to the chief and told him that there was a ramp freeze, which means no movement on the runway or taxiways. Lightning also had been sighted within five miles. After we sat a while, the load master announced over the loudspeaker that



Amaya, 33, of Fulton, Miss., serves with the 86th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. With eight years of military experience under her belt, she is currently taking classes and plans to enter an Air Force program that would send her to nursing school.

As a medical technician, Amaya's unit flies two scheduled missions a week transporting wounded U.S. servicemembers from Germany to the United States, and nine missions a week "down range," evacuating wounded warriors out of the combat theater. Special flights are arranged for critical-care patients.

On a recent flight, Amaya had the opportunity to meet President Bush and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney McKinley.



Courtesy Raelene Amaya

everyone needed to sit back down because we were going to be moving. Air Force One had just landed, and we were in its parking space.

We all sat back down, and after about five minutes, the engines shut off. The load master came back to the chief and announced to him, “Sir, the president is coming on board.”

My eyes widened with amazement and disbelief. I was beginning to believe that maybe this was a false alarm and the president wasn’t actually going to board. I went to the back of the jet to prepare to unload the bags and luggage. I looked out the window, and sure enough, a motorcade of black cars was coming toward us. I finished what I was doing and walked back up toward the front. President Bush came aboard.

All this was totally unexpected. For the patients, it was the greatest, especially seeing all their faces light up with smiles. They, too, couldn’t believe it. I can honestly say I saw firsthand the compassion of the president. I was in awe at how he went around shaking all the patients’ hands and giving each of them, yes, his coin! The coin of all coins. I was so happy for them. Surrounded by Secret Service agents, Bush had his photographer take a picture of him with each excited patient.

I was standing at the end of the litter stanchions, trying to stay out of the way. After all, the president was there to see the patients. Three patients were in the stanchion next to me. The patient on the bottom was sleeping, and when the president

moved over to him, he said he didn’t want to wake him up. He then looked over at me and asked, “Can you be sure he gets this coin?”

“Yes, sir, I sure can!” I replied.

He shook my hand with the coin in it. He then turned to his assistant. “Give me another one,” he said. “Here, you get one, too.”

I couldn’t believe it. The president shook my hand, put his arm around me and turned me so that we could face his photographer. We smiled for a picture, and then he looked at me and said, “Thank you for serving.” By this time I could feel my face reddening. I could barely believe it.

“Thank you, sir,” I managed to say. “It’s an honor to meet you.” I completely forgot to salute him. The president then went on meeting with patients, talking with them and even sitting on the floor to take pictures with them. It was an awesome experience. The look in his eyes when he saw the critical-care patients on ventilators – it got to him. I could see his sense of hurt. It was an unforgettable moment.

The president stayed aboard the jet a good 20 minutes. All of us felt the energy and motivation he left behind. I can really say that this was the highlight of my military career. To be personally thanked by the president and to receive his coin and the chief’s in the same day, I still can’t believe it. I am humbled and blessed to have had such an experience and, of course, to have something to show for it.



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[WAR ON TERROR]

Cheney to American Legion: 'We do not torture'

American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser coordinated an appearance and wide-ranging policy speech by U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney at the Indiana War Memorial on Nov. 1. The vice president discussed the budget, VA benefits and, foremost, America's standing in the global war on terrorism. Following is an excerpt from his speech.

One of the best weapons against terrorism is good intelligence – information that helps us figure out the movements of the enemy, the extent of the network, the location of their cells, the plans they're making, the methods they use, and the targets they want to strike. Information of this kind is the hardest to obtain, but it's worth the effort in terms of the plots averted and the lives that are saved.

So our government has taken careful but urgent steps to monitor the communications of enemies at large, and to get information from the ones that we have apprehended. We've respected civil liberties and upheld the high standards of this great country. And because we've been focused, because we've refused to let down our guard, we've gone more than six years without another 9/11.

No one can promise that there won't be another attack; the terrorists hit us first, and they're hell-bent on doing it again. We know this because of their public declarations, and because of the intelligence that we've gathered through monitoring and, yes, through interrogation. There's been a good deal of misinformation about the CIA detainee program, and unfair comments have been made about America's intentions and the conduct of American intelligence officers. Many of the details are, understandably, classified. Yet the basic facts are these:

- A small number of high-value detainees have gone through the special program run by the CIA. This is different from Guantanamo Bay. It's very important to keep those separate. Guantanamo Bay's select captured terrorists are sent and interrogated by the Department of Defense, according to the Army Field Manual.
- The CIA program is different. It involves tougher

customers – men like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of 9/11 – and it involves tougher interrogation. The procedures are designed to be safe, to be legal, and they are in full compliance with the nation's laws and treaty obligations. They've been carefully reviewed by the Department of Justice and are very carefully monitored. The program is run by highly trained professionals who understand their obligations under the law. And the program has uncovered a wealth of information that has foiled attacks against the United States, information that has on numerous occasions made all the difference between life and death.

The United States is a country that takes human rights seriously. We do not torture. We're proud of our country and what it stands for. We expect all who serve America to conduct themselves with honor. And we enforce those rules. Some years ago, when abuses were committed at Abu Ghraib prison – again, a facility that had nothing to do with the detainee program run by the CIA – the abuses that came to light rightfully outraged many people. The wrongdoers were arrested and prosecuted, and justice was demanded.

America is a fair and a decent country. President Bush has made it clear, both publicly and privately, that our duty to uphold the laws and standards of this nation admit no exceptions in wartime. As he put it, "We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them."

The war on terror is, after all, more than a contest of arms and more than a test of will. It is also a battle of ideas. To prevail in the long run, we have to remove the conditions that inspire such blind, prideful hatred that drove 19 men to get onto airplanes and to come kill us on 9/11. Many have noted that we're in a struggle for the "hearts and minds" of people in a troubled region of the world. That is true, and it should give us confidence. Outside a small and cruel circle, it's hard to imagine anybody being won over, intellectually or emotionally, by random violence, the beheading of bound men, children's television programs that exalt suicide bombing, and the desecration of mosques. The extremists ... are not really trying to win the hearts and minds, but to paralyze them, to seize power by force, to keep power by intimidation, and to build an empire by fear.



James V. Carroll

[STATEMENT]

Defense Secretary Robert Gates recently told The Washington Post that he envisions a long-term U.S. presence in Iraq of slightly more than 40,000 troops, whose mission will include "countering al-Qaeda, training Iraqi forces and acting as a bulwark against Iran."

[NATIONAL AFFAIRS]

Academic standards

During the same month that Columbia University opened its doors to Iranian strongman Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Stanford University's faculty protested the appointment of former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to a fellowship at the school's Hoover Institution.

Calling Rumsfeld "fundamentally incompatible with the ethical values of truthfulness, tolerance, disinterested enquiry," the faculty group circulated a petition that ultimately included 3,000 signatures. "I'm appalled," Stanford

professor Barton Bernstein told *The San Francisco Chronicle*. "He is a profoundly immoral man."

"A school is obliged to provide a public forum to the leader of a repressive terrorist regime," *The Wall Street Journal* countered. "But the mere presence of an American with more than three decades of public service – most recently dedicated to combating such regimes – is beyond the pale?"



[ACTIVE DUTY]

Special bonus for special ops

With \$100 million – a sliver of the defense budget – the Pentagon has reversed an exodus of elite warriors from the U.S. Armed Forces. According to the Associated Press, some 1,200 special-operations personnel – more than 900 Green Berets, 300 Navy SEALs, and dozens of Air Force commandos – have decided to stay in since the retention program began in 2005; more than half signed on for extended duty. Those who re-up for one year receive an \$8,000 bonus; two years, \$18,000; three years, \$30,000; four years, \$50,000; five years, \$75,000; and six years, \$150,000.

AP reports that Defense Secretary Robert Gates is so concerned about the private sector luring away U.S. special-ops forces that "he has directed Pentagon lawyers to explore putting no-compete clauses into contracts with security companies."



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[PERSONAL COMPUTING]

The power and pleasure of online society

BY REID GOLDSBOROUGH

What's the best way to share views with others online about topics of interest to you, whether related to work, a hobby, health, family matters, social matters, politics, religion or anything else you're involved with, reading about or thinking through? The three main Internet media for such communication are social networks, blogs and discussion groups.

■ **Discussion groups** came on the scene first, arising long before the Internet explosion of the mid-1990s. In many ways they're still the best way to tap into others and open up yourself. There are three varieties: e-mail based, Usenet and Web-based.

The largest e-mail-based discussion group network is Yahoo Groups. You can search for, peruse and join groups from the Yahoo Groups Web site at groups.yahoo.com. You can also participate in the discussions from Yahoo's

Web interface, but the strength of e-mail groups is the speed and convenience of using your favorite e-mail program. The biggest downside to e-mail groups is the clunkiness involved in sharing photos to illustrate what you're talking about.

Usenet groups share many of the same pluses and minuses of e-mail groups, though there are important differences. The largest aggregator of Usenet groups is Google, through its Google Groups Web interface at groups.google.com. You can use Google's interface to participate, or you can use most e-mail programs. Specialty programs such as Agent, www.forteinc.com/agent, offer additional tools.

The biggest difference between e-mail and Usenet discussion groups is that the former are typically moderated while the latter are typically not. Moderation reduces the frequency of abusive arguing, or "flaming," that's common in unmoderated online groups. But it can also hinder the free exchange of ideas.

Many Web sites have discussion groups associated with them, and these can be a good way to talk about specific issues with which the site is

involved. The main advantage to most Web-based discussion groups is the ease with which photos can be shared. Instead of having to upload them to a separate Web space and then link to them, you can include photos within the message you post to the group. Another advantage is that, unlike with e-mail or Usenet groups, you can typically edit your posts after you post them.

■ **Blogs** burst on the scene in 2001, although these Web logs, or online diaries, had earlier origins.

The main advantage of a blog is that it provides a microphone for the person setting it up, offering control over the subject matter and the degree of interactivity, if any. This is also the main disadvantage.

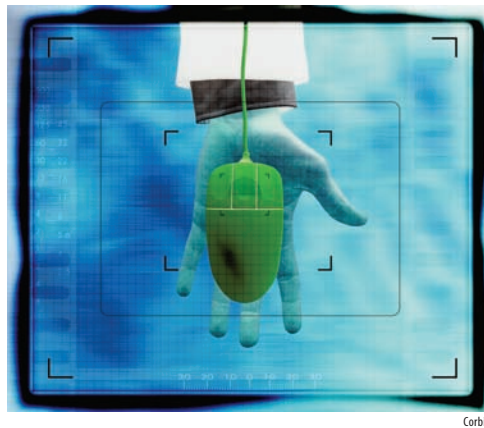
Blogs are primarily a talking-to rather than a medium to dialogue. They're often a way for people to hold forth. Unlike other types of online communication, the ethic is more akin to "Come to me and hear me speak" rather than "Let's

hash this out together." Blogger, www.blogger.com, provides an easy way to build your own blog, but it's also home to millions of them. Owned by Google since 2003, it allows you to create a blog in more than 30 languages.

■ **Social networks**, Web sites where those with similar interests can communicate by discussing, instant messaging, blogging and other means, are the newest way to talk online. Social networking reached critical mass in 2005 with the popularity of MySpace, www.myspace.com, a service that describes itself as a way to meet your friends' friends. Other popular general-interest social networks are Bebo, www.bebo.com, and Facebook, www.facebook.com.

Business social networks have also sprouted online. Participants share not only ideas but referrals. These, like all social networks, share with all types of online discussion media the key benefit of easy communication over distance.

Reid Goldsborough is author of "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." For more of his commentary, visit www.reidgoldsbrough.com.



Corbis

DO YOU NEED A CAREER COACH?

A career coach can be an invaluable resource in today's competitive, constantly changing and often difficult market. Consider whether you might need a career coach to help you plan and execute your job search.

Career coaches can help you explore and define your professional competencies, address personal issues impacting your career, clarify your career objectives, resolve obstacles, assist in managing successful job searches, and prepare you to competitively interview.

There are two types of career coaches: career-management and career-marketing.

The career-management coach focuses on broad issues related to your entire career – the past, present and future. Prime candidates for career management coaching are individuals in career transition and/or career limbo, uncertain about their objectives. Other candidates are

those who need ongoing support. They want a confidante and strategist at their side.

The career-marketing coach offers short-term support to guide you in developing, implementing and managing your job search. This type of coaching focuses on defining your objectives and developing a job-search plan. These coaches help you evaluate job-search activities – résumé postings, job lead reports, recruiter campaigns, networking – to identify those appropriate for your search and your specific objectives. This type of coaching is best for those who already know their career goals and are ready for action.

Coaches routinely charge \$50 to \$250 per hour. Shop wisely, ask questions and get to know the coach a bit before hiring him or her, to be certain you're a good match. Be a smart consumer and you'll be a successful job seeker.

Wendy S. Enelow is co-author of "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions." She also teaches workshops at American Legion veteran job fairs. www.wendyenelow.com

Federal jobs for veterans

The American Legion and Avue Technologies have launched a joint Web site to improve government employment opportunities for veterans. The site is free to all users.

One goal of the Web site is to connect veterans with better-paying government jobs. Veterans represent up to 37 percent of new federal government hires, but lag behind others in high-paying positions.

www.vetjobs.us

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[LIVING WELL]

GREAT STRIDES

Newest generation of prosthetics mimics human limbs.

BY JOEL KUPERSMITH, M.D.

Last July, dozens of reporters and photographers converged on the Providence VA Medical Center in Rhode Island to cover the debut of a new bionic ankle, demonstrated by a 24-year-old Army veteran who lost his lower left leg after being injured by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

The breakthrough device, the first powered ankle-foot prosthesis, propels wearers forward using tendon-like springs and a battery-powered motor. The result is less fatigue, better balance and a more natural gait for amputees. The inventor of the device, Dr. Hugh Herr, is himself a double-amputee. He lost both legs below the knee to severe frostbite during a rock-climbing trip. His passion today is designing “smart” limbs that mimic the action of real joints.

A longtime professor at MIT, Herr belongs to the Center for Restorative and Regenerative Medicine, a project of VA, MIT and Brown University that is also exploring such topics as:

- Surgical techniques to lengthen the bone in the residual limb, making it easier to fit artificial limbs and allow for greater control and mobility.

- Tissue engineering to help restore torn-up joints. Techniques may include the use of biodegradable polymer beads, smaller than pinheads, that would release proteins to stir the production of cartilage.

- Osseointegration, a method that allows prosthetic legs to be affixed directly to the bone in the residual limb rather than attached to a socket fitted over the stump.

The VA-funded center is also fostering the development of technology called BrainGate, which decodes brain waves and translates them into computer commands. The system, pioneered by Dr. John Donoghue, has enabled research volunteers with quadriplegia to switch on lights and

open e-mail using only their minds. It uses a tiny sensor implanted in the part of the brain that controls movement, and has intriguing implications for amputees.

Linking the brain to prosthetics is also the approach of a VA group at the Center for Functional Electrical Stimulation and the Center for

Advanced Platform Technology, both in Cleveland. Their aim is to enable smoother, more natural control of artificial arms

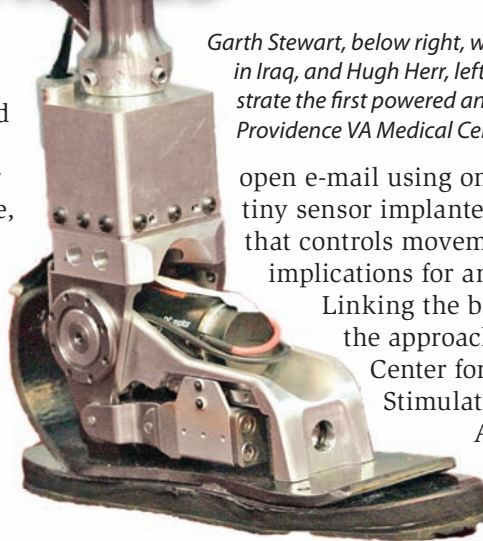
and hands using electronic sensors on the surface of arm and shoulder muscles. Brain signals will be detected by the sensors, decoded by software, and used to drive motors in the artificial limb. When a person thinks about raising or closing his prosthetic hand, the device will move accordingly, in a smooth, humanlike manner. In a later phase, electrodes inside the prosthesis will sense position and grip strength.

Other VA work on upper limbs, led by Dr. Richard Weir in Chicago, aims to allow amputees to not only open and close an artificial hand in a natural fashion, but to control a wrist, thumb and even individual fingers independently. One hand being developed by Weir's group in conjunction with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency has 18 degrees of freedom,

with each joint motorized. Researchers envision that the device will allow users to independently perform tasks requiring manual dexterity, such as buttoning a shirt or even playing piano.

Joel Kupersmith, M.D., is chief research and development officer for the Veterans Health Administration.

This article is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.



[TRAVEL]

Airlines announce discounts for Legion meeting attendees

Airline discounts are available from American Airlines, Northwest Airlines and United Airlines for qualified 2008 American Legion meetings. Discounts range from 2 to 15 percent depending on how far in advance tickets are purchased and the class of service.

Travelers may use the discount codes when purchasing tickets. National Headquarters also can apply discounts when obtaining tickets, as well as save service fees associated with using outside travel agents. In either case, tickets should be purchased at least 30 days prior to travel. To obtain tickets through National Headquarters, contact Marti Wooden.

(317) 630-1232, mwooden@legion.org

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| JAN 11-13 | Membership Planning Meeting | Indianapolis |
| MAR 26-APR 2 | DSO/Washington Conference | Washington (DCA, BWI & IAD) |
| APR 4-6 | Oratorical Contest | Indianapolis |
| MAY 2-8 | Spring Meetings | Indianapolis |
| JULY 16-26 | Boys Nation | Washington |
| JULY 30-AUG 3 | DSO School, Membership Wkshp | Indianapolis |
| AUG 5-10 | Junior Shooting Sports | Colorado Springs, CO |
| AUG 12-18 | American Legion Baseball Regionals | Hartford, CT; Richmond, VA; Charlotte, NC; Oklahoma City; Columbus, OH; Minot, ND; Bozeman, MT; Phoenix |
| AUG 19-26 | Baseball World Series | Charlotte, NC |
| AUG 19-29 | 90th National Convention | Phoenix |
| SEPT 19-21 | Children & Youth Conference | Indianapolis |
| SEPT 26-28 | Americanism Conference | Indianapolis |
| OCT 10-16 | Fall Meetings | Indianapolis |
| NOV 1-7 | Legion College | Indianapolis |

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[NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE]



FULL-THROTTLE PROGRAM

Legion Riders receive national endorsement.

In 1993, motorcycle enthusiasts Bill Kaledas and Chuck Dare decided to create something new to do for members of their American Legion post in Garden City, Mich. They started Legion Riders, so members could enjoy the open road together and promote the organization.

Fourteen years later, their vision has multiplied all over the nation, with more than 700 Legion Riders chapters at the post, district and department levels. And now Legion Riders is an official Legion program, after the National Executive Committee unanimously approved Resolution 35 during its October meetings.

“When we started out, we were really just trying to make Legion Riders a program of a post, one that would complement the post,” Kaledas said. “When people saw what the program was capable of doing and the simplicity of it, they wanted to join. But I would have to say it’s grown way beyond my imagination.”

The national resolution recommends guidelines for the program, which has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in the past two years for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund and has performed numerous community services, including family support at military funerals.

“I think being an official program will build Legion Riders in strength,” Kaledas said. “There may still have to be some fine tuning, but I think having that national endorsement is a great asset to the program.”

Recommended guidelines

- All members of Legion Riders shall be current members of The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary.
- Each member shall own his or her own motorcycle, properly licensed and insured according to state law.
- Legion Riders shall avoid the perception of being a “biker club.”
- The only recognized logo of Legion Riders is the one copyrighted and sold through American Legion Emblem Sales.

OTHER RESOLUTIONS

For the full text of resolutions passed during the National Executive Committee’s 2007 Fall Meetings in Indianapolis Oct. 15-18, contact The American Legion National Headquarters Library at (317) 630-1366, e-mail library@legion.org or visit www.legion.org.

Send a written request for a booklet of all approved resolutions to
The Library, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

AMERICANISM

- 1** Encourages departments to take steps to increase participation in American Legion Boys State
- 2** Opposes proposed flag-code change regarding conduct during the hoisting, lowering or passing of the U.S. Flag
- 4** Supports voter registration program

CHILDREN & YOUTH

- 33** Adopts Special Olympics as a national Children & Youth project, and urges posts, districts and department to support Special Olympics

ECONOMICS

- 31** Supports amending Public Law 109-461 to read that the spouse of any deceased certified owner of a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business retains said status

- 32** Supports elimination of the VA Home Loan funding fee

FINANCE

- 25** Adoption of Gift Annuity Program

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

- 6** Supports renovation of the USS *Arizona* Memorial Museum and Center
- 11** Renames Meeting Room 314A at American Legion National Headquarters in Indianapolis the “Herman G. Harrington Room”

- 35** Adopts American Legion Riders as a national program

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

- 26** Enters The American Legion into an agreement with the National Veterans

Legal Services Program to provide court representation on cases of precedential nature, at least two national training sessions for department service officers, and other services

- 28** Requests the Department of Veterans Affairs reinstate the generally accepted accounting practice of rounding up for 50 cents or higher

- 29** Supports legislation or administrative actions that seek to implement a seamless transition for severely wounded U.S. servicemembers serving in the global war on terrorism

- 30** Supports researchers’ efforts to further study long-term effects of traumatic brain injury (TBI)

[LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION]

DEPARTMENT OF DELAWARE Legion members across the state recently received certificates of training in the Delaware Citizens Corps Disaster Preparedness program, sponsored by Middletown American Legion Post 25, temporarily located in Odessa. "This training is our first step of implementing the American Legion disaster-preparedness program," said Chris Warner, chairman of the department's Legion Homeland Security Committee and member of Harrington Post 7. "We are organizing our 28 active posts in Delaware to act as disaster-preparedness centers throughout the state. From this class we will 'train the trainer' so as to allow Legionnaires at each post to be certified for disasters anywhere in the state." Don White, a member of Walter L. Fox Post 2 and immediate past department commander, was appointed director of operations.

[LEGION COLLEGE]

48 learn leadership the Legion way



One of the biggest classes of American Legion College students in recent years came to Indianapolis from 28 departments in November to hone their leadership, team-building, communications and mentoring skills. The five-day crash course included a curriculum of post revitalization in a variety of settings, from rural areas to the inner city. They also attended a workshop in writing resolutions, a tour of Roubidoux VA Medical Center and briefings from national division directors.

National American Legion College is designed to reinforce leadership, management and communication skills for a new generation of leaders and mentors in the world's largest veterans organization.

"You had a lot thrown at you in a short period of time," American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser told the graduating class. "Now is the time to go back to your communities, share what you learned and make a difference."

[FREEDOM TEAM SALUTE]

Army honors Wyoming veterans

The Freedom Team Salute (FTS) program, sponsored by the secretary of the Army and the Army chief of staff, has partnered with the Wyoming American Legion to commend more than 2,500 U.S. Army veterans in that state for their service. The first ceremony took place in Gillette, Wyo., on Veterans Day.

Those veterans commended receive a certificate of appreciation and a letter of thanks signed by the Army chief of staff and the secretary of the Army, along with an official Army lapel pin

and window decal. The entire package is provided at no cost to either the person who nominated the veteran or the recipient.

FTS gives the public the opportunity to nominate and thank veterans for their service, and the commendations bestowed upon them recognize their continued support after discharge.

Freedom Team Salute has honored more than 1 million Army veterans and advocates around the globe since May 2005.

www.freedomteamsalute.com

[CAREERS]

JOB FAIR CALENDAR

American Legion partners RecruitMilitary, LLC, and Military.com are coordinating seven veteran career fairs this month.

MILITARY.COM

Register for a Military.com event online.

www.military.com

Click on "Career Fairs."

JAN. 23 Detroit

JAN. 31 Fort Bragg, N.C.

RECRUITMILITARY

Register for a RecruitMilitary, LLC, career fair online.

www.recruitmilitary.com

Click on "Job Seekers" and then "Career Fairs."

JAN. 10 Savannah, Ga.

JAN. 17 Phoenix

JAN. 22 Houston

JAN. 24 Austin, Texas

JAN. 31 Sacramento, Calif.

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How to Submit a Reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are published free of charge.

Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year. Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other Notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim. Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name,

telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish the names of individuals, only the name of the unit from which you seek people. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership. Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE/ARMY AIR FORCES

11th Abn Air Assault Div Mid-Atlantic Chpt, Myrtle Beach, SC, 2/23-27, Herb Shapiro, (410) 827-6410, hshap@friend.ly.net; **91st Strat Recon Wing (McGuire, Yakota, Barksdale & Lockbourne, 1948-1957) 91st PRS, 91st SRS, 322nd SRS, 323rd SRS, 324th SRS, 91st ARS, FMS, AEMS, RTS, PMS, Sup Sqdn, Med Grp, AP Sqdn, Com Sqdn, HQ, 16th PRS, 31st SRS, 6091st SRS & 91st Bomb Grp & 91st Space Wing**, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 4/30-5/4, Jim Bard, (410) 549-1094, jimbardjr@comcast.net; **435th TCW & 76th, 77th & 78th Sqdns (Homestead AFB, FL)**, Sebring, FL, 4/11-13, Neil Bellinger, (863) 465-8144, colusafret@embarqmail.com; **485th Tact Msl Wing**, Valley Forge, PA, 6/5-8, John Rudzianski, (570) 278-2482, jrudz@epix.net; **494th Bomb Grp (H) 7th AF (WWII)**, Herndon, VA, 5/15-19, Marshall Keller, (248) 626-3684; **Firebird Assn - 17th TCS, 17th Trp Airlift Sqdn, 109th Airlift Wing, 517th Airlift Sqdn, NY Air Nat'l Guard**, Galveston, TX, 4/6-8, Bruce P. Huff, (713) 827-7975, b.huff@att.net; **Pedro Rescue Heli Assn**, Montgomery, AL, 4/17-19, Ed Cartwright, (901) 876-5200, edcartwright@yahoo.com; **Pilot Class 53-E**, Orlando, FL, 1/17-20, John Brill, (317) 501-8610, jwbrillsr@aol.com; **Ramey AFB Historical Assn**, Tucson, AZ, 4/15-19, Ken Coombs, (603) 735-4291, ken-bon@msn.com

ARMY

2nd Eng Cbt Bn Assn, Covington, KY, 5/1-4, Bob Fiedler, (607) 722-5491, rfiedler@stny.rr.com; **2nd Inf Div Korean War Vet Alliance**, Covington, KY, 5/1-4, Ralph M. Hockley, (713) 334-0271, rmh-2id-kwva@earthlink.net; **5th Light Air Section X Corps HQ (Korea, 1951-1953)**, Muzio Pellegrini, (914) 779-2243, matty777777@verizon.net; **8th Cav Rgt Assn**, Branson, MO, 5/15-18, Margaret J. Sharples, (570) 443-0889, angel836@pa.metrocast.net; **31st MP Dets & 385th MP Bn (Stuttgart, Germany, Heilbronn, Schwaebisch Hall, Schwaebisch Münd, Goppingen, Crailsheim, Ulm & Karlsruhe MP Stns)**, Louisville, KY, 5/9-12, Dick Burch, dckburch25@yahoo.com; **73rd Tank Bn & 73rd Armd, St. Louis, 5/1-5, Curtis Banker**, (518) 643-2302, dmbanker-curtis@northnet.org; **84th & 62nd Eng Const Bn (Korea, 1950-1953)**, Rochester, NY, 5/5-8, Ted Anbuhl, (251) 666-5521, tanbuhl@comcast.net; **97th Div 386th Rgt 2nd Bn E Co**, Des Moines, IA, 5/1-5, George Hillwig, (937) 293-0892; **134th Assault Heli Co (1967-1972)**, Minneapolis, 6/5-8, Corky Lauritsen, (320) 367-2930, corky@cornerscornerantiques.com; **199th LIB (Vietnam, 1966-1970)**, Reno, NV, 6/16-20, Ed Davis, (856) 854-7103, edward199@aol.com; **503rd Eng Co (LE)**, San Antonio, 5/18-21, Sherm Mills, (703) 590-3725, sm7409@aol.com; **508th MP Bn**, Branson,

MO, 5/1-7, Don Henderson, (765) 654-5288, dhoink@sbcglobal.net; **565th Med Co (Amb) (Baumholder, Germany, 1964-1967)**, Las Vegas, 5/13-16, Jim Gardner, (360) 636-2457, gardner1325@comcast.net; **ASA 114th Sig Serv 331st Comm Recon**, Rapid City, SD, 6/5-7, Len Bittner, (724) 778-9873, lbttnr@joimail.com; **Charlie Co 2/12th Inf Rgt, 25th Inf Div (Vietnam)**, Gatlinburg, TN, 6/5-8, Danny Breeding, (423) 345-5000, veteransservice@charter.net; **Counter-Intel Corps**, Linthicum, MD, 5/15-18, Dick Snyder, (813) 634-4489, rbcinder6@verizon.net; **Korean Mil Advisory Grp (KMAG)**, Bloomington, MN, 6/27-29, Joe Domagala, (763) 473-9587, jjdomagala@aol.com; **OCS Class 4-65 (Fort Benning, GA)**, San Antonio, 5/15-18, Don Donnay, (618) 842-5703, donnay@fairfieldwireless.net

COAST GUARD

Courier "Voice of America," Pine Knoll Shores, NC, 5/18-22, Gil Riggs, (505) 287-3338, giltheexplorer@msn.com

JOINT

Nav & MC Explosive Ord Disposal Assn, San Diego, 6/4-8, Wayne Wright, (661) 399-2517, wwright1@bak.rr.com; **Palau CVE 122 & MC Air Sqdns**, Virginia Beach, VA, 4/27-30, Harry G. Weldy, (410) 658-6043, hweldy@zoominternet.net; **Vets (All Branches & Eras)**, Baton Rouge, LA, 5/15-18, Robert L. Miller, (225) 749-8520, rmlsob@cox.net

MARINES

1st Mar Div A Co 1st Bn 7th Rgt (China, WWII), Quantico, VA, 4/15-17, Lou Clabeaux, (727) 399-9276, jrlclabeaux@webtv.net; **Cbt Vets of Iwo Jima**, Washington, 2/15-17, Cy O'Brien, (800) 722-9501, combatvetiwo@miltours.com

NAVY

58th Seabees, Branson, MO, 4/9-13, Carl Roberts, (541) 430-3410, carlsally@msn.com; **Ault DD 698**, Branson, MO, 4/30-5/4, Scott McLean, (651) 253-3068, encsmclean@aol.com; **Bluefish SS 222/SSN 675**, St. Charles, MO, 5/1-3, Gary Tinney, (304) 608-2993, blueassn675@comcast.net; **Boston CA 69/CAG 1/SSN 703**, Portland, ME, 7/10-13, Art Hebert, (603) 672-8772, secretary@ussboston.org; **Chikaskia AO 54**, Orlando, FL, 4/10-13, Robert Grant, (781) 249-5501, bobgrant1942@gmail.com; **Conyngham DD 371/DDG 17**, Lincolnshire, IL, 6/4-8, Len Gordon, (732) 432-0588, ddggusboat@aol.com; **Devosa AKA 27 (Nov 1944-April 1946)**, John Murray, (610) 293-6473; **Harry E. Hubbard DD 748**, Baltimore, 4/17-20, Mike Caruccio, (717) 235-5768; **Horace A. Bass**, Laughlin, NV, 4/8-11, Douglas A.

Hatch, (910) 845-2120, dahatch31@hotmail.com; **Lawrence DDG 4/DD 250 (All Years)**, Chicago, 6/17-22, Craig Bernat, (814) 322-4150, fc1ddg4@atlanticbb.net; **LCC Sqdn (WWII)**, Scottsdale, AZ, 5/4-8, Francis Bergemann, (623) 546-4375; **Lejeune AP 74**, Indianapolis, 6/18-22, Charles Miller, (941) 729-5406, chaz@reliable-net.net; **Macon CA 132**, Savannah, GA, 5/24-29, Ted Parker, (302) 947-1923, btarker1@msn.com; **Mine Warfare Assn**, Branson, MO, 5/28-31, Victor H. Barnaby, (734) 316-2134, barnabyv@comcast.net; **Ponchatoula AO/TAO 148/AOG 38**, Washington, 6/5-9, Barry Litchfield, (972) 270-1112, barrylitchfield@tx.rr.com; **Portsmouth CL 102 (1945-1948)**, Washington, 5/1-5, Walt Hohner, (732) 463-1745, wpohner@aol.com; **Postal Clerks**, Virginia Beach, VA, 6/4-8, Mike Patras, (757) 497-9270; **Princeton CV/CVA/CVS 37/ LPH 5**, Green Bay, WI, 6/9-12, Al Christopherson, (920) 846-3542, alverla@ez-net.com; **Richard S. Edwards DD 950**, San Diego, 6/26-29, Jack Turley, (540) 856-2575, trlyanch@shentel.net; **Roanoke CL 145**, Jacksonville, FL, 5/1-4, Tom Carter, (407) 767-9075, tomtinac@cfl.rr.com; **Robert H. McCord DD 822**, Gettysburg, PA, 6/18-21, Wendell McElwee, (513) 528-2067, wjmac2@fuse.net; **Shannon DD 25 (All Eras)**, Savannah, GA, 6/10-13, John K. Duegaw, (540) 288-9632, jkduiegaw@yahoo.com; **Stockton DD 646**, Portland, OR, 5/26-29, Clarence Nelson, (503) 397-1081, nelson5500@comcast.net; **Tucson CL 98/SSN 770**, Norfolk, VA, Clarence L. Decker, (215) 365-5873; **VC-7 (1950-1956)**, Nashville, TN, 5/2-4, Joe D'Ambrosio, (916) 689-6924, joeandterri@softcom.net; **VR-21 "Pineapple Airlines,"** Gainesville, GA, 5/4-9, Ron Kirkland, (770) 932-8675, rgseahorse@aol.com; **Whetstone LSD 27**, Charleston, 3/18-22, Everett Ward, (910) 790-1995, ekwardjr@aol.com

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Post 170, WI: Nicholas Basting, Robert Heideman, Robert J. Regan

IN SEARCH OF

1st Recruit Bn Plt 1065 (Parris Island, SC, 1969), Mike Foster, (207) 375-8111
7th Tng Bn Plt 188, "Gung Ho's Tent" (Parris Island, Feb-May 1951), Alfred J. Martin, (904) 744-4302, alfredjmartin@comcast.net
10th Inf Div 86th Inf Rgt G Co (Schweinfurt, Germany, 1955-56), Lou Bortolin, (575) 544-2473, loubornor@yahoo.com
26th Inf H Co "Blue Spaders" (Bamberg, Germany, 1949-1952), Frank Donato, (914) 235-4979
45th Div 180th Inf G Co (Korea, 1950-1952), Billy Gene Bruce, (706) 865-7159, racknomisty@windstream.net
52nd Ftr Wing (1948-1952), Lew Crispell, (845) 339-5279, eljacycee@localnet.com
65th Bomb Sqdn 43rd Bomb Wing (Davis Monahan AFB, Tucson, AZ, 1946-1949), James A. Hill, (810) 385-5293, jamesahill@aol.com
69th Eng Bn (Fort Hood, TX & Vietnam), John Riley, (903) 691-3388
133rd AC&W (Alexandria AFB, Sept 1953), Mitchell Gramza, (716) 937-9381
151st Trans Det (CHFM) (Bien Hoa, Vietnam, Dec 1964-Dec 1965), David A. Spivey, (337) 239-2236, chfm151@bellsouth.net
213th Eng Det (Can Tho, Vietnam, May 1968-May 1969), D. Hunter, (336) 629-2028, dhunter16@triad.rr.com
226th QM Bn (Saipan, 1944-1945), Gordon Bender, (610) 317-9242
324th Avn Div (Spartan Tower, Bien Hoa, Vietnam, 1968-1972), Jim Roberts, (724) 228-6015
341st Strat Msl Wing (Malmstrom AFB, MT, 1974-1978), Gerald Campos, (410) 519-4369, gsdcampos@verizon.net
354th Searchlight Bn A Btry (Africa) & A Co 255th Cbt Eng (Italy), Pete Tjovaras, (706) 738-6362
380th Air Police Cbt Def Sqdn (Plattsburgh, AFB, NY, 1963-1967), Jerry Hall, (610) 852-2929, jhall@ptd.net
577th & 72nd Eng (Fort Benning, GA, 1966), John Riley, (903) 691-3388
599th FA Bn A Btry (Fort Bragg, NC, Jan-Dec 1951 & Schwabisch Gmund, Germany, Dec 1951-May 1952), Moses Moore, (617) 491-7714
620th TCS (Monkey Mtn, Vietnam, 1969-1970), Neil Lillie, (715) 263-3200, neil@lillieagency.com
756th AC&W Sqdn Baseball Team (Finland, MN, 1952-1954), Richard Tarashuk, (908) 273-0706, pattiwatts@aol.com
774th Railway Grand Div (Rome, Italy, 1944-1946), Chris Christianson, (515) 965-8951

774th Tank Bn C Co M4A5 Sherman Tank Crew (Rhine & Ruhr, Germany, 1944-1945), Howard Zimmerman, (608) 262-1502, zimmerman@chem.wisc.edu

1280th Eng Cbt Bn (1944-1945), Leonard Drucker, (847) 564-2813, lddod2020@aol.com

1909th Ord (Harwin, Australia & Philippines, 1945-1952), Bert Otto, (509) 249-2902

A Btry 6th Msl Bn 61st Arty (Freising, Germany, 1962-1965), Floyd Drake, (740) 896-3022, mcdrakes@aol.com

All Cos 228th Avn Bn (ASH) (Chinook), 1st Cav Div (AM) (Fort Benning, GA & Ahn Khe and Bien Wa, Vietnam, Aug 1965-Sept 1970), Bill Sanford, (636) 627-8852, 1sgtbill@sbcglobal.net
Amphion AR 13 (1962-1964), Matthew G. Powell, lorace1@msn.com

B Co (Andrews Barracks, Berlin, Germany, 1954), Richard Stickrod, (904) 608-3348, floridastickrods@bellsouth.net

Baker Btry 92nd AAA Bn (Brize Norton

AB, England, 1952-1953), Frank Cassell, (252) 482-7140, mystery@inteliport.com

Charlie Co 11th Eng Bn 3rd Mar Div (DMZ Area, 1967-1969), Gene Spanos, (708) 369-3606, watchcmdr1@sbcglobal.net

Det 2 Personnel Proc (Prestwick AB, Scotland, 1955-1956), Jerry Walker, (941) 743-7143, reklaw33@yahoo.com

Det 3 3rd RRU 1st Bde 101st Abn Div (Vietnam, 1965-1966), Steve Eicherly, (714) 290-9039, seicherly@sbcglobal.net

Eisenhower CVN 69 Deck Dept (1980-1985), James R. Morrow, (402) 462-8753

Football Teams (Landstuhl AB, Germany, 1957-1958 & Ramstein AB, Germany, 1958-1959), Richard Milotte, (239) 561-9451, lucky5192@aol.com

Heli Crew Chiefs 8th Trans Bn 580th Trans Co (Fort Bragg, NC, 1954-1955), Les Knight, (352) 686-9391

HQ & HQ Co 1st Bn 32nd Armd (Friedberg, Germany, 1966-1968), Gentry Cohran, (770) 459-6496, cohraans@earthlink.net

H57 Heli ASW Sqdn (Norfolk, VA NAS, 1956-1957), Vince Cervone, (631) 878-1965, zontnick@yahoo.com

Miles C. Fox DD 829 (Brooklyn, NY, 1971-1974), Greg Micjan, (724) 938-3436

Pac Flt Cbt Camera Grp (1951-1954), Larry R. Dylina, (909) 825-2389, lrdylina@juno.com

Plt 171 (Parris Island, June-Sept 1957), Dick Leitte, (763) 753-2228, leitte8@aol.com

Plt 1004 (Parris Island, Sept-Dec 1958), Bob Moore, (863) 674-0610

Shipley Bay CVE 85 (Okinawa Coast, May 1945), Darwin K. Williams, (661) 213-4287

Staff Co A Radio & Cable Unit GHQ FEC (1949-1954), James Sheil, (314) 863-5072

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John W. Johnston, Dept. of Illinois. Nat'l Legis. Cmsn. Memb. 1994-2000 and Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1999-2000.

Frank Piamplano Sr., Dept. of New Jersey. Dept. Cmdr. 1971-1972, Nat'l Children & Youth Cmsn. Memb. 1972-1981, Nat'l Rehab. Cmsn. Advisory Board Memb. 1972-1973, Nat'l Children & Youth Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 1973-1974, 1976-1978 and 1979-1981, and Nat'l Children & Youth Cmsn. Chmn. 1974-1975.

Lawrence G. Smith, Dept. of Pennsylvania. Nat'l Pilgrimage Cmte. Memb. 1965-1967, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Memb. 1966-1967, 1973-1974 and 1979-1981, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 1971-1972, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1977-1983, Dept. Cmdr. 1984-1985, Nat'l Legis. Cncl. Memb. 1985-1990, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1986-1988 and Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1988-1994.

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*There's no time like the present.
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TWO BROTHERS were walking home from Sunday School, each deep in his own thoughts. Finally, one boy said, "What do you think about all that devil stuff we learned today?"

The other replied thoughtfully, "Well, you know how Santa Claus turned out. The devil's probably just Dad in disguise, too."

AN ELDERLY COUPLE sat in their porch rockers watching a beautiful sunset and reminiscing about the good old days. Suddenly, she turned to him and said, "Honey, do you remember when we first started dating and how you would just casually reach over and take my hand?"

The man looked over at her, smiled and obligingly took her aged hand in his.

With a wry little smile, his wife spoke again. "Honey, do you remember how after we were engaged, you'd sometimes lean over and surprise me with a kiss on the cheek?"

The man slowly leaned over and gave her a soft kiss on her wrinkled cheek.

Growing bolder still, his wife said, "Honey, do you remember how, after we were first married, you'd kind of nibble on my ear?"

The man rose from his rocker and headed into the house. Confused, the woman asked, "Where are you going?"

"To get my teeth!" he yelled.



*"They're hard to control in meetings,
but they sure beat the hell out of a power tie."*



*"Herb? My wife and I discussed it, and we're going
to spend some quality time together today."*



"Your estimate runneth over."

AN OLDER WOMAN knocked on the door of her daughter's house, and her grandson answered the door. "Hi, Grandma!" the boy said. "Daddy saw you coming and said you're all he needs!"

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